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THE SAKAS IN INDIA AND THEIR IMPACT ON Indian Life And Culture

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THESIS FOR PH. D.
1971-72

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VISHWA MITRA MOHAN

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THE SAKAS IN INDIA
and
THEIR IMPACT
on
INDIAN LIFE AND CULTURE

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
of the
Vikram University, Ujjain
by
Vishwa Mitra Mohan

●

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●

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CERTIFICATE

* * *

I certify that this thesis, entitled the Sakas in India and their Impact on Indian Life and Culture, is an original work done and completed under my guidance by Sri Vishwa Mitra Mohan. It takes into account all the relevant material and presents the first coherent picture of the political and cultural life of the Sakas.

(B.S. UPADHYAYA)
Professor & Head,
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in Ancient Indian History,
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VIKRAM UNIVERSITY, UJJAIN

* * *

Spelling of Sanskrit Letters

***

(a) Vowels

अ = a
आ = ā
इ = i
ई = ī
उ = u
ऊ = ū
ऋ = ṛ

ए = e
ऐ = ai
ओ = o
औ = au
अं = m
अः = ḥ

(b) Consonents

ङ = ṅa
च = cha
च्च = chcha
च्छ = chchha
छ = chha
ञ = n̆
ट = ṭa
ठ = ṭha
ड = ḍa

ढ = ḍha
ण = ṇa
न = na
म = ma
श = śa
ष = ṣa
स = sa
क्ष = kṣa
ज्ञ = jn̆a

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ABBREVIATIONS USED

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A.I.U.;	The Age of Imperial Unity, Ed. R.C. Majumdar.
A.S.I.;	Archaeological Survey of Reports.
B.M. Cat or B.M.C.	Catalogue of coins in the British Museum Ed. P.Gardner or E.J. Rapson.
C.H.I.;	Cambridge History of India.
C.H.I(i);	Cambridge History of India (Indian Edition).
C.I.I.or Corpus	Corpus Inscriptionan Indicarum
G.B.I.;	Greeks in Bactria and India, W.W.Tarn.
Hist.Ind.;	A Comprehensive History of India, Vol.II., (Ed.K.A. Nilakantha Sastri).
I.A.	Indian Antiquary.
I.H.Q.;	Indian Historical Quarterly.
J.A.;	Journal Asiatique.
J.A.S.B.;	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
J.B.B.R.A.S.;	Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J.B.O.R.S.;	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.

J.O.A.S.;	Journal of the American Oriental Society.
J.R.A.S.;	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
N.I.A.;	New Indian Antiquary.
O.M.;	The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy, Longman Green and Co., London, 1873.
P.M.Cat.;	Catalogue of coins in the Punjab Museum, Ed. Whitehead.
Z.D.M.G.;	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft.

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PREFACE

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The present work entitled *The Śakas In India And Their Impact On Indian Life And Culture* is my dissertation for Ph.D. The work is divided into two parts, Part I presenting the political background of this study and Part II dealing with the Śaka culture.

Part I is divided into four chapters. Chapter one discusses the material relating to the original home and movements of the Śakas before their advent to India. The Śakas were astir in the lands stretching from the upper valley of the Danube to the borders of China across the Russian steppes, along the Baltic and the Caspian Seas and over the Altai regions. Building up a state of terror in the whole of Central Asia and to its west and east through their constant movements and predatory tribal swoops and inroads over settled peoples, they rode and camped, killed and were killed. They formed occassionally the turbulant settlements of the various empires of Hittites, the Assyrians and the Persians. Called sometimes Aryans, sometimes Persians, they kept restive along the millenniums preceding the present one and ultimately after a struggle for existence in the valley of the Oxus and on the eastern borders

of the Parthian emperors the Śakas treked to India seeking a home.

Their arrival in India was incidental partly to their search for a settled home and partly to the treachery of a Jain monk. Their treking to India forms part of the second chapter of this thesis of which the later part deals with their allegiance to their recent home in Seistan and their establishments in India. A fair lot of material collected from recent Russian excavations have been pressed into the pages dealing with the first chapter which is a material little known out of the confines of the U.S.S.R. Considerably new matter also makes up the contents of the second chapter.

Chapter three is a political resumé of the history of the Śaka rulers and Satraps who established the five houses of Sind, Taxila, Mathura, Malwa and Maharashtra.

Their scattered home and shattered condition after the indigenous forces broke down the resistance of the Śakas and they were ousted from their seats of power in northern and western India, form the study of chapter four under the caption of the Remnants of the Śakas. This aspect of the Śakas is presented by the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta. The rise of the Śahiyas,

the latter's struggle for existence and their ultimate disappearance are dealt with next.

Part II of the thesis treats of the cultural impact of the Śakas on Indian life. Chapter five discusses the political legacy inherited by the Śakas and chapter six studies their religion, art and architecture. The influence of the Śakas on Indian language and literature forms part of chapter seven and the following chapter deals with their propagation and patronage of astronomy in India. The Administration, Coinage and Currency are dealt with in chapter nine and chapter ten treats of the Economy and Corporate Life under the rule of the Śakas. The last chapter, the eleventh, entitled Conclusion, besides being an analytical summery of the contents of the foregoing chapters, reflects on the Indianization of the Śakas and other such alien ethnic units.

Except for the political sections, which to some extent are known facts and therefore could not have been avoided, the rest of the thesis is original in both its content and treatment. The Śaka life before their advent to India is little known in the country. This brings to light numerous facts which had never been coherently studied or marshalled

in a historical composition. The dismemberment of the Śaka rule and disappearance of the Śakas also have been studied in a way different from that attempted until now. The chapters of Part II deal with the cultural aspect of the Śaka rule and are for the first time systematically and historically arrayed. The study of the guilds and such other corporate bodies has found favour with some scholars but few people know that guilds were mostly contemporaneous, at least in their developed form, with the Śaka rule in India. That aspect of Indian economy has been more thoroughly treated in this thesis. The work is original in bringing the above mentioned material together and seeks to advance knowledge by supplying new material and interpreting it in the context of contemporary research.

My work has been completed at the Vikram University in its School of Study for Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology under the guidance of its Professor and Head, Dr. B.S. Upadhyaya. It was only due to his inspiring guidance and personal interest that the work has taken its final shape. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to him, which cannot be expressed in words. I must also acknowldge my deep indebtedness to the pioneers in the field, where

[illegible]
in a historical perspective. The [illegible]
[illegible]
the caste rule and development of the guilds also
[illegible]
have been studied in a way different from that
[illegible]
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V. M. MOHAN

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CHAPTER- I

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The Śakas, Their Origin and Habitat

The problem of the Śakas or Scythians still remains a tangle in history. An endless lot has been written[1] regarding their ethnic affinities and original home and yet the tangle remains to be solved. They seem to have hopped and scurried, ferreted and rummaged over the entire expanse of Asia from the border of China to the ravines of the Danube, settled and unsettled civilizations and appeared in and disappeared from regions serving as smart scourges over climes and settled peoples.

The first reference to the Śakas in Indian literature occurs in the Mahābhārata[2] where some of their tribes find mention as Magas, Masakas, Manasas and Mandagas. The Bhaviṣ~~h~~ya Purāṇa[3] almost repeats the names confirming the divisions as Magas, Magagas, Gānagas and the Mandagas. Of these the first two divisions and the last correspond to those enumerated in the Mahābhārata and can be accepted as identical with them. The Purāṇa not only gives

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[1] Vide the Bibliography at the end of the volume.

[2] VII. 12,33.

[3] मगाश्च मगगाश्चैव गानगा मन्दगास्तथा, I.139.

their settlements (janapadas) a castely order[1] but even equates the divisions as Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras. Magas, says the Purāṇa, are Brahmins, the Magagas Kṣatriyas, Ganagas Vaiśyas and Mandagas Śūdras.[2] That the Maga divisions of the Śakas were regarded Brahmins in India from the time of their early settlement~~s~~ in this country is confirmed by the existence of the Śākadvīpī Brahmaṇas who call themselves also Magas or Makas to this day and who could not be lost in the caste of the orthodox Brahmins. They still remain distinct and the indigenous Brahmin communities do not interdine or intermarry with them.

The Magas or Magi, Iranian priests (the Scythians were equated with the Iranians in the ancient world) and the dreaded Gog and Magog (= Ganga and Magaga) have found mention in the Bible. The Magi, doing reverence to the new-born Christ, have been treated in their portrayal by numerous painters of the mediaeval world. Saga and Mada are variants of Maga or Maka. Mada (=Māda) have been mentioned in the Assyrian records of the middle of the 9th century B.C. as an Iranian tribe. Mada

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1. तत्र पुण्या जनपदाश्चातुर्वर्ण्यसमन्विताः, ibid.

2. मगा ब्राह्मणभूयिष्ठा मगगाः क्षत्रियाः स्मृताः ।
वैश्यास्तु गानगा ज्ञेयाः शूद्रास्तेषां तु मन्दगाः ॥ ibid.

are located in those records next to the Parsa, the Persians. Maga (Maka) or Magus are universally accepted to have been Iranian priests. They assume the name 'Magi' in the writings of Herodotus.[1] The old Persian epigraphs also, like the Assyrian, mention the Maga or Maka whom Herodotus calls a Median tribe.[2] The variant Saga or Śaka, the name most widely used in Indian records and literature, has been sought to be formed from the Indo-European root 'skeud', to shoot[3] or from '(s)ken' meaning to watch.[4] Its Iranian root 'sak,' to go, to run, to flow, comes nearest to the word Śaka. Its European equivalent, Scythian, is formed from the Iranian word 'skutha', from 'sak,' meaning an archer.

The nomadic habits of the Śakas, the lightning speed with which they moved and struck their enemies and their wanderlust kept them always on their horses and they seemed to be everywhere. The result was that they came to be identified with all the nomads of the Eurasian steppes. The Greeks

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1. B.K.I., 101.
2. Bagchi, *India and Central Asia*, p.128.
3. O. Szemerenyi, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlundischen Gesellschaft*, Vol.101, 1951, p.212.
4. A.J.Van Windekens, *Beitrage zur Namenforschung* I.1949, pp. 98-102.

as a result used the word Śaka in a generic sense. They indicated all the tribes moving from the borders of China to the Carpaphians, in fact all nomads by the word Scyth (Śaka or Saha).[1] Niebuhr calls them Tartars or Mongols[2] and K.Mullenhoff Indo-European.[3] Some consider the modern Slavs inhabiting the valley of the Danube in eastern Europe and Russia to have descended from the Scythians. Cimmerians, once dwelling to the east, north and west of the Caspian Sea and always to the west of the Scythians, whom the latter were constantly driving to farther west during the late second and first millennium B.C., generally regarded as their cousins, have been identified with the Scythians by G. Rawlinson.[4] He thinks that the word Gimiri is a mere Babylonian transcript of the Iranian word Śaka, which perhaps basically and originally signifies a nomodic wanderer.[5] Their proximity with the Iranians, both in habitat and language has suggested to many as their having arisen from the Iranian stock and to several as akin to the Ugro-Altaians.[6] It is universally acknowledged

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[1] Gordon Childe, Encyclo. Britannica, 1939, XX, pp.235-38.

[2] Kleine Schriften, p. 362.

[3] Deutsche Altertumskunde, II.

[4] History of Herodotus, III, p.182.

[5] ibid.

[6] T.Talbot Rice, The Scythians, p.39. Cf.E.H. Minns, Scythians and Greeks.

that the language of the Scythians was basically Iranian although more deeply connected with the Avestic form than to the ancient Persian.[1] But it is also conceded that the Ugrian elements crept into their language which shows that they mixed freely through mating and cultivating a fair deal of a common form of speech although the ruling Scythian remained Iranian in blood and speech. It will be difficult, however, to distinguish ethnically the Iranian unit of the Scythians from the Mongol.

Fortunately some Greek and Chinese writers have referred to the tribal hordes which had created unrest in most parts of the Central Asia and part of eastern Iran. This period very much deals with the advent of Śakas in India and we can, therefore, examine these writings to find out if these tribal movements had anything to do with the advent of Śakas in India. Herodotus[2] writes that a tribe of wandering Scythians separated itself from the rest and escaped into Median territory while Cyaxares, son of Deioces, was ruling in Media.[3] He makes us believe that the Scythians drove the Cimmerians out of Europe into Asia and in their

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[1] ibid., also cf. Rostoretzeff, Iranians and Greeks.
[2] En. Tr. by A.D. Godley, Vol.1, B.K.1, 15, 73.
[3] ibid., B.K.1, 73, 103.

pursuit of Cimmerians they came to Media. While commenting on this Mr. Godley in footnote-1, p.135, is frank enough to admit that Herodotus' geography in the story is difficult to follow. Herodotus further gives the route that the Scythians are supposed to have followed to enter Media.[1] He believes that after defeating Media, the Scythians ruled the entire Asia for 28 years, when the Median emperor Cyaxares once again recovered his territory.[2]

Herodotus mentions Sacae along with Caspii as the 15th province of the empire of Darius who exacted from them an annual tribute of 250 (talents).[3] This fact is quite close to the record in the Bahistun Rock inscriptions.[4] Herodotus gives the history of the Scythians as under :

"The Scythians say that their nation is the youngest in all the world, and that it came into being on this wise. There appeared in this country, being then desert, a man whose name was Targitaus. His parents, they say --- for my part

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1. ibid., B.K.1, 104.
2. ibid., B.K.1, 104, 105.106 and 107.
3. B.K. III, 91-93,Also refer to Thomas,Sakastana, J.R.A.S., 1906, p.181.
4. C.H. I(1) 1955 p.302.Inscriptions nos.14 to 17.

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1. Ibid., H.A.I, 103.
2. Ibid., H.A.I, 104, 105,106 and 107.
3. H.A. III, 93,[illegible] refer to [illegible], [illegible], 1905, p.161.
4. [illegible] 1950 [illegible] Inscriptions [illegible]

I do not believe the tale, but it is told — were Zeus and a daughter of the river Borysthenes.[1] Such (it is said) was Targitaus' lineage; and he had three sons, Lipoxaïs, Arpoxaïs, and Colaxaïs, youngest of the three. In the time of their rule (so the story goes) there fell down from the sky into Scythia certain implements, all of gold,namely, a plough, a yoke, a sword and a flask. The eldest of them seeing this, came near with intent to take them; but the gold began to burn as he came, and he ceased from his essay; then the second approached, and the gold did again as before; when these two had been driven away by the burning of gold, last came the youngest brother, and the burning was quenched at his approach; so he took the gold to his own house. At this his elder brothers saw how matters stood, and made over the whole royal power to the youngest."

"Lipoxaïs, it is said, was the father of the Scythian clan called Auchatae; Arpoxaïs,the second brother of those called Katiari and Traspian, the youngest, who was king, of those called Paralatae. All these together bear the name of Skoloti, after their king; "Scythians", is a name given them by Greeks.[2]"

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1. B.K. IV, 5.
2. B.K. IV., 6.

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1. H.IV, 5.
2. H.IV, 6.

This account can be compared with the record in the Cuneiform inscriptions of Darius where three different and widely separate settlements of Scythians are mentioned.[1] These settlements taken from east to west have been identified as follows:

1. The Śakas Tigrak-Hauda wearers of pointed helmets. Herodotus has described them as the Sacae, who are Scythians.[2] He further adds that they were "on their heads, tall caps, erect and stiff and tapering to a point."[3] These were included together with their neighbours, the Bactrian, in the army of Xerxes. They had their home in the country of river Jaxarters (the Syr Daria).

2. The Śakas Haumavarka the AUVPYZOI, who have been identified with the Śaka settlers of Drangiana later known as Śakastan or Seistan.[4]

3. The Śaka Tara-Daria or the Śakas over the sea. This settlement can be referred as Scythians of Europe who inhabited the Steppes of Russia to the north of the Black Sea.[5]

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[1] Rapson, C.H.I. Vol.1, 1922, p.565, (p.509 Indian edition); also see K.A. Nilakantha Sastri, History of India, Vol.II, p.187; Thomas, J.R.A.S., 1906, p.186.

[2] B.K.VII, 65

[3] Mark the numerous Śaka sculptured heads helmeted with tall and tapering caps exhibited in the Mathura Museum.

[4] Thomas, J.R.A.S., 1906, p.186.

[5] Rapson, C.H.I.Vol.I, 1922, p.564.

Herodotus gives further interesting stories about the origin of the Scythians :[1]

" Such is the Scythians' account of themselves and the country north of them. But the story told by the Greeks who dwell in Pontus is as follows. Heracles, driving the king of Geryones, came to this land, which was then desert but is now inhabited by the Scythians. Geryones dwelt westward of the Pontus,[2] being settled in the island called by the Greeks Erythea, on the shore of the Ocean near Gadira, outside the pillars of Heracles. As for the Ocean, the Greeks say that it flows from the sun's rising round the whole world, but they cannot prove that this is so. Heracles came thence to the country now called Scythia, where, meeting with wintry and frosty weather, he drew his lion's skin over him and fell asleep, and while he slept his mares that were grazing yoked to the chariot, were marvellously spirited away.

"When Heracles awoke he searched for them, visiting every part of the country, till at last he came to the land called Woolland, and there he found in a cave a creature of double form

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1. B.K. IV, 8,9,10 and 11.
2. Godley, A.D. Herodotus, p.207, f.n.1- "very far west, Gadira being identified with Cadiz."

Herodotus gives further interesting stories about the origin of the Scythians[1]:

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"When Heracles awoke he searched for them, visiting every part of the country, till at last he came to the land called Woodland, and there he found in a cave a creature of double form

---

1. Ibid. IV, 8,9,10 and 11.

2. Godley, A.D. Herodotus, p.207, f.n.1.
"Pontus (or sea), Euxine being understood
with Pontus."

that was half damsel and half serpent. When he saw her he was astonished, and asked her if she had anywhere seen his mares straying; she said that she had them, and would not restore them to him before he had intercourse with her; which Heracles did, in hope of this reward. But though he was fain to take the horses and depart, she delayed to restore them, that she might have Heracles with her for as long as might be; at last she gave them back saying to him, 'these mares came and I kept them safe here for you, and you have paid me for keeping them, for I have three sons by you. Do you now tell me what I must do when they are grown big. Shall I make them to dwell here (for I am the queen of this country), or shall I send them away to you ?' Thus she inquired, and then (it is said) Heracles answered her, 'When you see the boys grown to man's estate, act as I bid you and you will do rightly; whichever of them you see bending this bow thus and girding himself in this fashion with this girdle, make him a dweller in this land; but whosoever fails to achieve these tasks, which I command, send him away out of the country. Thus do and you will yourself have comfort and my bidding will be done.'

"So he drew one of his bows (for till then Heracles ever bore two), and showed her the girdle, and delivered to her the bow and the girdle, that had a golden vessel on the end of its clasp; and having given them, so departed. But she, when the sons born to her were grown men, gave them names, calling one of them Agathyrsus and the next Gelonus and the youngest Scythes; moreover, remembering the charge, she did as she was commanded. Two of her sons Agathyrsus and Gelonus, not being able to achieve the appointed task, were cast out by their mother and left the country, but Scythes, the youngest accomplished it and so abode in the land. From Scythes, son of Heracles, comes the whole line of the kings of Scythia; and it is because of the vessel that the Scythians carry vessels on their girdles to this day[1]... "

"There is yet another tale, to the tradition whereof I myself do especially incline. It is to this purport;the nomad Scythians inhabiting Asia, being hard pressed in war by the Massagetae, fled away across the river Araxes to the Cimmerian country (for the country which the Scythians now inhabit is said to have belonged of old to the

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[1] This would make Śakas an Indo-European tribe begotten by a Greek father.

Cimmerians) and the Cimmerians, at the advance of the Scythians, took such counsel as behoved men threatened by a great host. Their opinions were divided, both were strongly held, but that of the princes was the more honourable, for the commonalty deemed that their business was to withdraw themselves and that there was no need to risk their lives for the dust of the earth; but the princes were for fighting to defend their country against the attackers. Neither side would be persuaded by the other, neither the people by the princes nor the princes by the people; the one part planned to depart without fighting and deliver the country to their enemies, but the princes were resolved to be slain in their own country and not to flee with the people, for they considered how happy their state had been and what ills were likely to come upon them if they fled from their native land. Being thus resolved they parted asunder into two equal bands and fought with each other till they were all slain by their own hands; then the commonalty of the Cimmerians buried them by the river Tyras, where their tombs are still to be seen and having burried them departed out of the land; and the country being empty, the Scythians came and took possession of it."

The stories are quite interesting but evidently they have little history in them. We may, however, infer from the above that at one particular stage Scythian was a name given to more nationalities than one and the word was synonymous with nomad tribes. From further references in Herodotus[1] it appears that they lived in an area which was exceedingly cold but quite fertile. The land had at least eight rivers. Dr. Smith with the help of references in Herodotus[2] has tried to locate this area somewhere in the north of Bactria and somewhat bordering Afganistan. It is difficult to arrive at any location with the help of references given by Herodotus. Some of the references are vague and have no bearing on the geographical map of that time. Moreover his writings do not seem to have been based on first hand information. They seem to have drawn stories prevalent in the places which he visited, and may be, that some of these places were very remote from those he has mentioned.

Land of Scyths.
Herodotus.

According to the Periplus,[3] the land of the Scythians is beyond Zarangiana which is

Land of Scythians
Periplus

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1. BK. IV, p.23, 28,48 to 58.
2. Z.D.M.G., 1907 p.414.
3. Schoff, Parthian Stations, p.9.

identified as the 14th Satrapy of Darius.[1] According to Schoff, the names signified lake dwellers and the reference there is made to lake Helmund.[2] Names of cities have also been given in the Periplus and though Schoff[3] tried to explain them, the account is vague. It can only be said that the anonymous author found the Śakas settled somewhere in the north or northwest of Afghanistan.

Indo Scytha
Ptolemy
Vague and unreliable

In addition to his Indo-Skythia, in chapter 12, Ptolemy while giving the map of Asia tries to locate the position of the Sakai.[4] He writes:

> "The Sakai are bounded on the west by the Sogdianoi along their eastern side already described, on the north by Skythia along the line parallel to the river Jaxartes as far as the limit of the country which lies in 130° E. 49° N. on the east in like manner by Skythia along the Meridian lines prolonged from thence and through the adjacent range of mountains called Askatangkas as far as the station at Mount Imaos, whence traders start on their journey to Sera which lies in 140° E, 43° N."

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[1] ibid, p.32, also Thomas, J.R.A.S., 1906, pp.181 et.seq. particularly p.185.

[2] ibid., p.32

[3] ibid., p.32 to 39.

[4] McCrindle, Ancient India, pp.283, 284.

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Indo-Scythia

Ptolemy

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[1] Ibid, p.32, also Thomas, J.R.A.S., 1906, pp.181 et.seq. particularly p.198.

[2] Ibid., p.32

[3] Ibid., p.32 to 33.

[4] McCrindle, Ancient India, pp.283, 284.

"The country of the Sakai is inhabited by nomads. They have no towns, but dwell in woods and caves. Among the Sakai is the mountain district, already mentioned, of the Kōmêdai, of which the ascent from the Sogdianoi, lies in 125°, 43°. And the parts towards the valley of the Komedai lie in 130°, 39°. And the so-called stone tower lies in 135°, 43°.

"The tribes of the Sakai, along the Iaxartes, are the Karatai and the Kōmaroi, and the people who have all the mountain region are the Kōmêdai, and the people along the range of Askatangka the Massagetai; and the people between are the Grynaioi, Skythia and the Toornai; below whom, along Mount Imaos, are the Byltai."

Giving further details about Skythia in Ch.14 he goes on to add that "Skythia within Imaos is bounded on the west by Sarmatia in Asia along the side already traced, on the north by an unknown land, on the east by Mount Imaos, on the south and also on the east by the Sakai and the Sogdianoi and by Margine...."

"All the territory of this Skythia in the north, adjoining the unknown region is inhabited by the people commonly called the Alanoi

Skythai and the Souobenoi and the Alanorsoi, and the country below these by the Saitianoi and the Massaioi and the Syêboi, and along Imaos on the outer side the Tektosabes, and near the most eastern sources of the river Rha the Rhoboskoi below whom the Asmanoi.[1]"

After this description, Ptolemy mentions many other tribes and adds that below these are "the Kakhagai Skythai along the country of the Iaxartai. Further west than the Aspisia range are the Aspisioi Skythai and further east the Galaktophagoi Skythai, and in the like manner the parts farther east than the Tapoura and Syêba ranges are inhabited by the Tapoureoi."

"The slopes and summits of the Anarea Mountains and Mount Askatangkas are inhabited by the homonymous Anareoi Skythai below the Alanorsoi, and the Askatangkai Skythai further east than the Tapoureoi, and as far as Mount Imaos."

"The country of the Skythia is spread over a vast area in the east of Europe and in Western and Central Asia.[2]"

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[1] ibid., pp.285 - 287.

[2] ibid., pp.288, 289.

According to Ptolemy the Skythia even extended beyond Imaos.[1] This particular Skythia was surrounded on one side by Skythia within the Imaos and by a curved mountain and an unknown land in the north and by a part of India beyond the Ganges towards its south.[2] This particular Skythia was inhabited by a variety of peoples. He writes :

"The northern parts of this Skythia are possessed by the Abioi Skythai, and the parts below them by the Hippophagoi Skythai, after whom the territory of Auxakitis extends onward, and below this again, at the starting place already mentioned, the Kasian Land, below which are the Khatai Skythai, and then succeeds the Akhasa land, and below it along the Emoda the Kharaunaioi Skythai. Skythia beyond Imaos embraced Ladakh, Tibet, Chinese territory and Mongolia."

The above description of Skythia and Sakai seems to be fairly confusing and that of the lands and their inhabitants almost imaginary. In any case Ptolemy's knowledge of the regions on

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1. ibid., p.292.
2. ibid., p.293, 294.

either side of the Imaos was of the vaguest possible nature.[1] This is perhaps due to the reason that almost the whole of his material is based on the Marinus of Tyre and he has fully acknowledged his obligations.[2] If the date of Tyre is taken to be 120 A.D.,[3] the date that can be ascribed to Ptolemy's work would be after 120 A.D. That would mean that his information was not only second hand but it was posthumous also. As such, it can be utilised only with care.

We have examined in detail the description of the Śakas and their land as given by Indian and other classical works of the time. Whereas they give an indication of the presence of Śakas as one of the foreign elements in India, we get very little information from these sources, which can help us to solve the problem of the nationality and origin of the Śakas. Basing our information on these ancient writings we can conclude that originally the word Scythian was

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1. ibid., p.296, Also see Bunbury, Vol.II, p.597 and Mazumdar's introduction to McCrindle's Ancient India XIII, XIV.
2. ibid., p. XIV.
3. ibid., p. XIV.

generally given to the nomads, who inhabited the northern regions of Asia and Europe.[1]

The term Śaka was at times confused to an extent that even Kadphises and Kaniska are also termed as Scythians (Śakas).[2] With this vague information available, the task to establish the ethnic origin of the people known as Śakas to the Indian history is rather very difficult. In the following lines, we shall endeavour to fix up our scope of study about a branch of these nomads who appeared in north-western India sometime in the 1st century B.C. and continued to rule here till after the advent of the Christian era.

From Herodotus,[3] we learn that "a tribe of wondering Scythians separated itself and escaped into Median territory." This seems to have happened when Cyaxares, King of the Medes, was busy in a battle against the Assyrians.[4] If we

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1. *C.H.I.* Vol.I (1922) p.564, ibid., Indian ed. p. 509; *J.O.A.S.*, 1941, p.243, and 247.

2. J.A., 1908, p.40. *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, Vol.20, p.272, Z.D.M.G., 1906, pp.49-52, Smith, V.A., *J.R.A.S.*, 1903, p.2, Banerjee, R.D., Notes on Indo-Scythians, *J.A.S.B.* Vol.IV, 1908 (New Series) pp.81 and 89, Bchhofer, *J.O.A.S.*, 1941, p.247.

3. Bk. I, 73

4. ibid., 103.

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From Herodotus,[3] we learn that "a tribe of wanderer Scythians separated itself and escaped into Median territory." This seems to have happened when Cyaxares, King of the Medes, was busy in a battle against the Assyrians.[4] If we take the death of Cyaxares as 656 B.C.[1], the movement of the Scythians into Media should be close to this date. The event happened during the life time of Cyaxares, which is further confirmed by Herodotus.[2] During this movement they seem to have occupied the territory which is called by the name of Scythia by Herodotus.[3] According to him, this land of the Scythians was a four-sided country which had sea on its two sides.[4] The account about the location of the Scythic tribes given by Ptolemy, as has been remarked earlier is so vague that it needs no comment. According to this writer[5], all the country along the rest of the course of the Indus is called by the general name of Indo-Skythia. He has given a detailed description of this Indo-Skythia, and has mentioned a number of places assigning longitude and latitude references to each one of these places. According to him Indo-Skythia was "a vast region which comprised all the countries traversed by the Indus from where it is joined by the river Kabul onwards to the ocean."

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[1] C.H.I. Vol.I (1922) p.564, I.H.Q., Indian ed. p. 223; J.R.A.S., 1941, p.263f. and 441f.

[2] J.A., 1902, p.40. J.B.B.R.A.S., Vol.20, p.284; J.R.A.S., 1906, pp.40-48, and Ch. V.S. J.R.A.S., 1903, p.2, Banerjee, R.D., "Notes on Indo-Scythians, I.A.S.B. Vol.IV, 1908 (New Series) pp.81 and 88, Mazumdar, I.H.Q., 1941, p.245.

[3] Hd. I, 73

[4] Ibid., 103.

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1. ibid.
2. BK-I, 107.
3. BK.IV, p.89, 100 and 101.
4. BK.IV, p.101.
5. ibid., pp.35 and 136.

As has been remarked in the foregoing pages, the description referred to above is as vague a description as could have been possible from a person who wrote it without any direct or personal information. McCrindle[1] has also objected to this description saying that "Ptolemy's description here is vitiated by his making the combined stream of the Punjab rivers join the Indus only one degree below its junction with the Kabul, instead of six degrees, or half way between that point and the ocean. (an inexcusable error in the existence of records of Macadonian invasion)."

From the comparison of the description of "Skythia" by Herodotus with that given by Ptolemy, it appears that the territories described by both the writers were different. It would, therefore, mean that the Scythians were all the time mobile and were changing their location from place to place.

It seems that there was a colossal movement by the Scytho-Iranian tribes about the beginning of the first millennium B.C. which had

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[1] ibid., p.136, 137.

great repercussions on Iran, South Russia, Assyria, Ionia and India. Tribes became restive about 800 B.C. following a severe drought in the steppes[1] and tribe struck against tribe, clan against clan, and there ensued a chaotic war of all against all. In the region north of the Oxus the Massagetae tore the Scythians from their settlements and the latter assaulted the eastern Cimmerians around the Solokha Kurgan, who, fighting on foot, were no match to the Scythian horsemen. The Scythians, hard on the heels of the Cimmerians, drove them into Urartu of the Assyrian records and modern Armenia. Only a section of the Scythians, however, continued the pursuit, the rest moved away in different directions. A few hordes seem to have crossed the Jaxartes and a few others the Volga flooding the southern regions of Russia; yet others went down the defiles of the Derbend and engaged Sargon (Sharukkin), the Assyrian conqueror.[2] In 680 B.C. Esarhaddon, the Assyrian monarch, is said to have married the daughter of a Scythian prince.[3] Thus

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1. Ellsworth Huntingdon, The Pulse of Asia, p.ix.
2. T. Talbot Rice, The Scythians, p.44.
3. ibid.

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1. Ellsworth Huntington, The Pulse of Asia, p.1[illegible]
2. T. Talbot Rice, *The Scythians*, p.44.
3. Ibid.

it was that in the first millennium B.C. the whole of the Eurasian steppes came to be dominated by tribes of Iranian affinities the chief of which were the Scythians who spread now on the other side of the Caspian. The eastern shores of the Caspian thus became an early home of the Śakas who lived there for a fair long time.

Through their settlements and frequent inroads the Scythians had already come to influence Iran deeply in a number of ways and during the period immediately preceding the rise of the Achaemenian empire the Scythian element predominated in Iran. Much in the manner of Darius' inscriptions Herodotus too coupled the Sakai with the Bactrians as also with the Indians and mentioned them as forming the 15th nomos of the Persian empire.[1] He refers to the Scythian defeat by Darius. He writes, "The desire seized him to exact vengeance from the Scyths, who once in days gone by invaded Media and defeated those who met them in the field and so began the quarrel.[2]" F.W. Thomas thinks aright when he locates the Śakas in Sakastan or Seistan[3] long before the first references to them

Herodotus

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[1] Histories, I.153, VII. 64, IX. 113, VII.9, III.93.

[2] G. Rawlinson, History of Herodotus, III. p.1.

[3] J.R.A.S., 1906, pp.181-200.

It was thus in the first centuries B.C. the whole of the Gandhara stepped over to be dominated by tribes of Iranian affinities the chief of which were the Scythians who spread far on the other side of the Hindukush. The eastern shores of the Caspian thus became an early home of the Sakas who lived there for a fair long time.

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2. G. Rawlinson, History of Herodotus, III. p.1.
3. J.R.A.S., 1906, pp.181-200.

✓in Indian literature were made.

A great wealth of material has come to light by the effort of the Soviet archaeologists who have excavated the ancient Śaka sites of Tien-Shan-Altai, Pamir and Pamir-Ferghana. The expedition was led by Semirechye followed up by Prof. S.P. Tolstov.[1] In 1933 M.P. Griaznov, who had direct knowledge of the burials at Pazirik in Altai, contributed a paper[2] on the burial of the Śaka chieftains and gave the details of the ceremonies with which the dead were interred there. Men fully accoutred with the fighting equipage of armour and helmet along with their horses have been dug out. Both the horses and horsemen are perfectly preserved not only in their metallic equipage but also in the Egyptian manner, in their flesh and bones without the help of embalming, the heap of the ice and snow alone

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[1] 'Central Asian Scythians in the light of the Latest Archaeological Discoveries'- an excellent paper full of information relating to the Śakas read by Prof. Tolstov at the International Conference on Asian Archaeology held at New Delhi in 1961, pp.12-15. Unfortunately the reports of these excavations have not been translated yet from the Russian to a European language and so most of the western scholars have not benefitted from them.

[2] The Pazirik Burial of Altai, American Journal of Archaeology, XXXVII, 1933, pp.33-44.

shielding the bodies from dissolution. These Scythian chieftains and their horses are now preserved and exhibited in the Leningrad Museum and they furnish the first and final proof of the Śakas' having their very early, if not the original, homes in the region to the north of the Caucasus in the Eurasian steppes.

Beginning of Sakas

In about the 7th century B.C. various tribes of the Śakas were dwelling in the region spreading from the Carpathian and the north of the Caspian to the Oxus, Jaxertes, Altai and the borders of China. The biggest clan among them were perhaps the Massagetae, Mahāśaka, 'the great Śaka', living between the rivers Don and Jaxertes and over Khwarezm. They were nomads who had hardly passed out of the Chalcolithic civilization and were using swords and spears of brass and copper. They were adepts in shooting arrows from horseback. Another Śaka tribe, the Sakarauka, were spread out to the east of the Massagetae and to the north of the Jaxertes. To the south of them lay Sogdiana. Dahae, another branch, lived perhaps between the Massagetae and the Sakarauka who later moved to the Caspian border of Iran.[1] It will be hardly

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[1] F.G. Bergmann, Les Scythes, p.540; Cf.also Rahula Sankrityayana, Madhya Asia kā Itihāsa, I.p. 73-74.

possible, however, to accept Rahula Sankriyayana's suggestion that the Khasas of Nepal, Kasas of Kashmir, Kaskars of Gilgit-Chitral and the Khasgiri in Kashgar are identical with or descended from the ancient Śakas.[1] The statement has hardly been borne out with evidence. So also the Yueh-chi cannot be identified with the Sakas, as Sankrityayana has sought to do,[2] for the former are almost universally accepted to have been Turks. The Śakas of Altai roamed in the Pazirik valley and it is their chieftains buried with their horses who have been referred to above and whose corpses are now exhibited in the Leningrad Museum. We shall have occasion later to return to this mighty branch of the Śakas while dealing with their social and obsequial habits and ceremonies.

The great Persian emperor Cyrus met his end in the battle-field fighting the Śakas, the Massagetae, in the 6th century B.C. His great successor, Darius I, resolved to revenge the death of his predecessor, sallied forth from

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[1] Madhya Asia kā Itihāsa, I.p. 74.

[2] ibid.

Iran, appeared across the Sea of Marmora in the valley of the Danube and then wheeling round and detouring over the land to the north of the Black Sea fell on the Śaka horsemen. He pursued them and was himself given chase when his great army was struck in its rear and thus, harassed by the Massagatae, was compelled to beat a hasty retreat in 513 B.C. All the same, a few of the tribes were made to bow to the might of the emperor who recounted them among his settled peoples in his epigraphical records extolling his victories.

3rd cent B C

There was another great racial movement in Central Asia in the 3rd century B.C. Due to loss of pastures the Hiungnu living to the east and south of the Yueh-chi expanded to the west and stumbled on the latter who lashed against the Śaka tribes. The Sarmatians too had already started their westward expansion and defeated and drove the Scythians. The Śakas were thus beaten on almost every front and the Yueh-chi, first worsted by the Wu-Sun and worsting them themselves, drove some of the Śaka tribes towards the valley of the Oxus by the Pamirs. This was Bactria where the Indo-Greeks were holding sway. The Śakas uprooted them and were themselves trounced

and ousted by the Yueh-chi who were following them on their heels. While staying in Bactria they had waged constant wars on Iranian rulers and had many a time succumbed to the Persian pressure when they had accepted to act under the hegemony of the Parthian monarchs whom they acknowledged as their sovereign lords when in India.

Driven by the Yueh-chi the Śakas helplessly moved towards the west covering the south-eastern wastes of the Iranian plateau bordering on the Oxus. The Hindukush proved too high a barrier for them to scale and they sprawled like streams finding their way slowly over the sands of the desert. It was there perhaps in Sakastene that an event occurred which proved a windfall to the dislodged refugees who, getting corrupt and idle through the easy life on the Oxus, were now looking for a land where they could settle down with the prospects of a permanent home.

~~[illegible]~~ Trek to India

The windfall was an invitation from a Jain patriarch. The patriarch Kālakāchārya had been wronged by Gardabhilla, king of Ujjayinī, who had taken liberties with his sister. Kālaka,

finding no means of revenge forthcoming in the land, crossed the Indian frontiers on the west and stumbled on the hordes of Śakas looking for asylum. The Śakas wanted a home to settle in and Kālaka was seeking allies to deal with his enemy, the king, and on his invitation the Śakas moved into Sindh where they formed an island with themselves and as a result their first settlements in India came to be called Śakadvīpa. From Seistan to Śakadvīpa there does not seem to have been much arms-at-passage but after staying for a while in Sindh when they forked out towards Taxila and Avantī, they met with considerable resistance. From Kabul down to Taxila along the spurs and slopes of the Hindukush, in the valleys of Swat and Bajaur and across the Indus and the Jhelum, there lay the principalities of turbulent men, the fore-fathers of the present-day Pathans, ruled by fortune-loving Greek potentates. To take the road towards Kabul or Taxila was out of question although after a time when the power of the Greeks over Gandhāra weakened, the Śakas did come to hold Taxila too from where they ruled the west and the east. But for the moment they decided

to follow Kālaka to Ujjayinī. That region was still called Avantī and Daśarṇa and the Mālavas of the Rāvī had not yet settled there and given their name to it. About then it was that the Mālavas were moving via Jaipur towards the valley of the Chambal and were making for the fertile plateau of Avantī when the Śakas too proceeded to grab that land. The tribes struck against each other. Perhaps the Mālavas proved the stronger of the two. The great victory of the Mālavas over the Śakas is supposed to have been commemorated by the founding of the Vikrama era by the Mālava chief Vikramāditya in 57-56 B.C.[1]

From Chinese sources it is learnt that at one time in the wild planes of north Asia extending from the Arctic Ocean to the planes of Jaxarties there lived from a remote antiquity a nomadic population which was not very large, but in proportion to the area it occupied it was wide spread.[2] This nomadic population was generally known to have been turbulant at occasions.[3] With

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[1] Vide Vikrama-Smṛti-Grantha, B.S. Upadhyaya's article.

[2] O.M. p.113.

[3] ibid., p.114.

the increase of numbers of these nomads a general tribal movement started sometime in the third or second century B.C. The history of these migrations has been given by a Chinese writer named Chang-Kian who was sent on a mission from China to the Yueh-chi sometime in B.C. 139.[1] On the basis of the information available from this Chinese authority it is inferred that the initial wave of migration was started by a tribe known as Hiung-Nu, identified as the Huns.[2] According to Rapson, this event took place in about ~~in~~ 165 B.C.[3] According to Tarn, this movement started in 176 or 174 B.C.[4] The migration thus started forced the Yueh-chi to leave their country and resulted in a general upheaval of the tribes in Central Asia, and in turn affected the entire history of that region and the territories around it.[5] This general migration of tribes was responsible for the entry of nomadic tribes into India either through Kabul or through the Bolan pass. In the coming pages we shall examine one of such tribes which established at Taxila and wielded authority for sometime over a large territory extending over most of the Punjab.

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[1] ibid., p.115.
[2] ibid., p.115.
[3] C.H.I. p. 565.
[4] G.B.I. p. 276.
[5] C.H.I. p. 565.

The waves of the Śakas seeking to enter Malwa were stayed for a time and the 96 leading families of the Śakas which had sought to move via Madhyamikā, Nagari near Chitor, the usual route from the coastal west to Ujjayinī, stayed where they had been stopped, nevertheless they kept biding their time, for Sindh and the desert ahead was neither attractive as a thriving home nor was it immune from attacks from the west and the north.

We do not know the circumstance which brought them to Malwa. It may have been the zeal for conquest or the call of the Jain patriarch to lead an expedition against Gardabhilla who must have succumbed to the onslaught of the Mālawas. When the Sakas moved into Avantī they appeared as its masters and were soon rooted to the soil. They spread out towards the west and south, Saurashtra and Maharashtra as other families of the Śakas settled in Taxila and Mathura. The history of the Śakas in Malwa and Saurashtra came henceforth to be bound up together and they stayed there, challenged at times by the Sātavāhanas and the Abhīras, until they were driven towards the north-west first by Samudragupta and finally exterminated by Chandragupta II. They held the heights of the Hindukush and watched the frontiers of India as Sāhiya rulers until the advent of the Turks, Subuktagin and his son Mahmood, who threw them down the spurs and distributed them across Lamghan.

CHAPTER - II

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The Trek to India

The Śaka period of Indian history is a phase in ancient India, which covers a few centuries, one before the advent of Christ running along those immediately following the Christian era. The Śakas appeared on the horizon of Indian history sometime in the first century B.C., and they are traced by historians down to the second and even to the third or fourth century A.D. At this stage, we shall not endeavour to discuss these dates but we shall be content to record that they were ruling in the plains of Punjab and a part of modern U.P. A long rule is also attributed to Śakas in parts of Malwa and Saurashtra.

It is evident from the epics and Sanskrit classical and Puranic literature that the Śakas were well known in India[1] when those works were composed. Here are a few references which will prove the case in point. In the epics, the Śakas are mentioned as "degenerate Ksatriyas", who had

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[1] Thomas, F.W., Śakastan, p.204; Jaiswal, K.P., J.B.O.R.S.,Vol.16, 1930, p.229.

lost their caste through their neglect of religion and social code.[1] They are generally mentioned in association with Parthians (Pahlwas) and Greeks (Yavanas).[2] In the dictionaries, the word *Śaka* has been explained to mean a Kṣatriya or a country[3] or a tree[4] or an island.[5] According to *Nānārthaśabda Kośa*, the word Śaka means a tribe[6] or a king or an island.[7] The *Nālanda Viśālaśabda Sāgara* considers Śakas "a nation amongst Yavanas (Greeks)."[8]

Śakas are also mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* as one of the fighting forces[9] that assembled at the great battle of Kurukṣetra. While giving the list of kings who joined Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas, in the great battle, it is mentioned that Sudakṣiṇa, the king of Kamboja came with an army manned by Yavanas and Śakas.[10] It is mentioned that Śakas and Yavanas came from beyond the Himalaya and that none of these were under their own kings.[11] From

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1. Rapson, *C.H.I.*, Vol.1, 1922, p.540, also *G.B.I.*, p.173.
2. ibid., p.563, *C.H.I.*(1) 1955, p.508.
3. *Viśvaprakāśa Kośa*, p.4 Sl.25.
4. ibid., p.5, v.35.
5. ibid.
6. Jivananda Ed. p.3, v.35.
7. ibid., p.3, v.36; Cf also *Śabdārtha Kaustubha*, p.822.
8. P. 1318.
9. *C.H.I.*(i) 1955, pp.226 and 245.
10. Pargitar, F.E., *J.R.A.S.* 1908, p.313, also *C.H.I.*(i) 1955, p.226.
11. Pargitar, F.E., ibid., 1908, p.331.

the map given against p.332 in the J.R.A.S.1908, it appears that the Kamboja kingdom was to the north east of Taxila.

There is a reference to Śakas in the Bhīṣma Parva of the Mahābhārata.[1] In chapter 11 of this Parva[2] it is stated that Śakas belonged to a territory known as Śakadvīpa which encircled the Kṣīroda Sāgara (Caspian Sea). They have been clearly distinguished from Tuṣāras (Kuṣāṇas) and Yavanans (Greeks)[3]. In Vālmiki's Rāmāyaṇa, there are references to the struggle of the ancient Aryans and the mixed forces of Yavanas and Śakas.[4] In Kiṣkindhā Kāṇḍa, the Śakas have been distinguished from but mentioned together with the Kambojas, Yavanas and Bāhlīkas.[5] In addition to these references, Śakas are also mentioned in the Manusmṛti,[6] where they are classed with the Yavanas, Kambojas and Pahlavas.

The authors of various classical works and epics have accepted Śakas as a matter of reality

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1. Chap.9, Sl.51.
2. Sl. 8-9.
3. Bhīṣma Parva 75, 21, Karna Parva 94, 60, Anuśasan Parva, 68, 21.
4. Bālakāṇḍa- 54, 21 and 55, 3.
5. 43, 12.
6. X, 43, 44.

and have given them a low status as compared to Ksatriyas of the Aryan origin. It is mentioned that they became 'Vṛṣalas' or low caste people for want of Brahmanic practices.[1] The Charaka Saṁhitā mentions that Śakas and their associates Yavanas, Pahlavas and Vaṇikas eat meet, wheat floor and drink the intoxicant Madhvikā.[2]

Śakas have been mentioned in great detail in the Purāṇas.[3] The Matsya, the Yuga and the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas mention 18 Śaka kings who ruled for 183 years after the Āndhra and Sātavāhanas.[4] Presumably this is a reference to the Western Satraps who ruled in Ujjain. The Yuga Purāṇa composed within some fifty years of Pushyamitra Śunga's rule,[5] tells very clearly that Śakas came after the Yavanas and the Śunga King Vasumitra. It is clearly said that Śakas fought against Odraka, possibly the successor of Vasumitra.[6] The entire text runs as

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1. Manusmṛti (x) 43, 44; Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana Parva, 68, 21.
2. Chikistā Sthāna, Chap. 30, 316.
3. Matsya, 122, 3, 34.
4. Pargitar, F.E., Dynastics of the Kali-age, pp. 44-46; also pp. xxiv, xxi, 65 and 72.
5. The description follows the sack of Pātliputra by the Greeks (perhaps Demetrius) when the 'provinces will be cast into chaos and the kings will be trounced.'
6. J.B.O.R.S., Vol.16, 1930, pp.21-26.

under :

"Now after king Vasumitra there will be king Oḍraka. He will be engaged in a war with the powerful Śaka hordes. Fighting a bloody battle with the powerful Śakas, he will be pierced by an arrow. Then the people who had fallen from righteousness and had taken to the wrong faith, will, as foretold in the puranic tradition, be carried away in large numbers (as slaves) by the dreadful Śakas. One-fourth of the population will be massacred by the Śakas and the other forth, that will remain, will be taken to their own city.

"Thereafter there will be mightly Amlâṭa whose whole wealth will be his bow. That red-eyed Śaka against whom no one will dare enter the lists, will march on Puṣpapura. He will find the town deserted. Then that barbarian Amlâṭa of red-eyes, wearing coloured garments, will put to the sword the helpless people (who will be staying) and depopulate the city. The chief will massacre men of all the four castes. Having repopulated the city with persons below the four castes (that is Śakas) the red-eyed Amlâṭa with his relations will be killed, and one, Gopala by name, will be the king over those that will outlive the revolution (lit. the termination of Amlāṭa's reign). Then king

Gopāla, too, after one year's rule will be engaged in war with Puṣpaka and will be slain by him. Then the unholy one, Puṣpaka by name, will be king. He, too, after one year's rule, will meet death (at the hand of Sarvila) and then the unassailable one Sarvila will be king. Having ruled the earth for three years, he too will be killed, and then will succeed a king of evil fame known to people as hostile to Brahmanism. His reign also will last for three years. At the close of that period that powerful chief of the Śakas, who was wicked and unholy, will invade the country of the Kāliṅgas being actuated by greed. Attempting to seize the territories of the ruler of the Kāliṅgas, belonging to the Śaka (that is Śatavāhana) family, he will lose his life (in the compaign); and the dense hordes of detestable Śakas, will, without fail, be destroyed by vollies of arrows. Then that king who was the flower of the Śāta family, will, with his forces, conquer the (Magadha) land and, at the end of the tenth year (after the conquest), will give up his ghost. The powerful Śakas will be (very) avaricious. The end of the Śaka rule will leave the land desolate, and the beautiful city of Puṣpapura will present a dismal sight. After that I wish it

Gopala, too, after one year's rule will be engaged in war with Pusyaka and will be slain by him. Then the unholy one, Pusyaka by name, will be king. He, too, after one year's rule, will meet death (at the hand of Savila) and then the unassailable one Savila will be king. Having ruled the earth for three years, he too will be killed, and then will succeed a king of evil fame known to people as hostile to Brahmanas. His reign also will last for three years. At the close of that period that powerful chief of the Sakas, who was wicked and unholy, will invade the country of the Kalingas being actuated by greed. Attempting to seize the territories of the ruler of the Kalingas, belonging to the Sata (that is Satavahana) family, he will lose his life (in the campaign); and the dense hordes of detestable Sakas, will, without fail, be destroyed by volleys of arrows. Then that king who was the flower of the Sata family, will, with his forces, conquer the (Gangetic) land and, at the end of the tenth year (after the conquest), will give up his ghost. The powerful Sakas will be (very) ambitious. The end of the Saka rule will leave the land desolate, and the beautiful city of Puspapura will present a dismal sight. After that I will

will be (again) the capital of a new king in future.[1]

This version, incidently, appears to be very close to reality as the last Śunga king Odraka, can be traced to end his rule in

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[1] J.B.O.R.S., Vol. 16, 1930, p.21;
(the text is as under :
वसुमित्रात् ततो राज्ञ: प्राप्ता राज्यमथोद्रक: ।५०।
मीमि: स शकसंघोतर विग्रहं समुपश्यति ।५१।
तत: शके रणे घोरे प्रवृत्ते स महाबल: ।५२।
नृप: पृषत्कपातेन मृत्युं समुपयास्यति ।५३।
तत: प्रणष्टचारित्रा अकर्मोपहता: प्रजा: ।५४।
हरिष्यन्ति शका घोरा बहुलास्ता इति श्रुति: ।५५।
चतुर्भागं तु शस्त्रेण नाशयिष्यन्ति प्राणिनाम् ।५६।
शका: शेषं हरिष्यन्ति चतुर्भागं स्वकं पुरम् ।५७।
ततो म्लाटो धनुर्मूलो भविष्यति महाबल: ।५८।
अरणो लोहिताक्ष: स पुष्पनाम गमिष्यति ।५९।
स वै तन्नगरं सर्वं शून्यमासादयिष्यति ।६०।
स तु म्लेच्छस्ततो म्लाटो रक्ताक्षो रक्तवस्त्रभृत् ।६१।
जनमादाय दिवसं पुरमुत्सादयिष्यति ।६२।
तत्र वर्णांस्तु चतुर: स नृपो नाशयिष्यति ।६३।
वर्णाधोवस्थितान् सर्वान् कृत्वा पूर्वमवस्थितान् ।६४।
अम्लाटो लोहिताक्ष: स विपत्स्यति सबान्धव: ।६५।
तत्र प्रजायां शेषायां तस्य राज्य परिक्षये ।६६।
भविष्यति ततो राजा गोपालो नाम नामत: ।६७।
गोपालस्तु तदा राज्यं भुक्त्वा संवत्सरं नृप: ।६८।
पुष्यकेनत म संयुज्य ततो निधनमेष्य ।६९।
ततो धर्मपरो राजा पुष्यको नाम नामत: ।७०।

199 B.C.[1] This date can be established taking the foundation of Maurya empire by Chandra Gupta in B.C. 324-321, as the basis of calculation and referring to Greek writers. We know that about the same time, Śakas overran the empire of Heliocles, the descendents of Eukretides in Seistan.[2] It is

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सोऽपि संवत्सरं राज्यं भुक्तवा निधनमिष्यति ।७१।
ततस्तु सविंलो राजा तरण: सुमहाबल: ।७२।
सोऽपि वर्षत्रयं भुक्तवा पृथ्वीं निधनमिष्यति ।७३।
ततो वै कुयजा: को व्यग्रसरायो लोकविश्रुत: ।७४।
तस्यापि त्रीणि वर्षाणि राज्यं दुष्टं भविष्यति ।७५।
शकानां स ततो राजा सर्वलुब्धो महाबल: ।७६।
दुष्टभावश्च पापश्च कलिङ्गान् समुपस्थित: ।७७।
कालिङ्गशातराज्यार्थी विनाशं वै गमिष्यति ।७८।
शकाण्डा: शरफलविलुप्ताङ्गाश्च संयति ।७९।
धनिष्ठास्तु हता: सर्वे भविष्यन्ति न संशय: ।८०।
तत: शातपरो राजा कृत्वा दण्डेन मेदिनीम् ।८१।
व्यतीते दशमे वर्षे मृत्युं समुपयास्यति ।८२।
अर्थलुब्धा: शका: सर्वे भविष्यन्ति महाबला: ।८३।
विनष्टे शकराज्ये तु शून्या पृथ्वी भविष्यति ।८४।
पुष्पनाम पुरं शून्य वीभत्सं भविता तत: ।८५।
भविष्यति नृप: कश्चिन्य: कश्चिद् भविष्यति ।८६।

For a different reading of the text see Dr. B.S. Upadhyaya's the Vikrama-Smṛti-Grantha.

1. J.B.O.R.S., Vol.16, 1930, p.37.

2. ibid.

just possible that some branch of the Śakas fought against Odraka and conquered part of his empire. This would mean that the Śakas once, even though for a while, penetrated as for deep into India as Magadha. We shall take up this matter in the following pages in detail but here it would suffice to mention that there is no doubt about their presence in Mathura and in Ujjain. From the presence of the Śakas in these two places, we can safely infer that they had large territories under their control for a long time. It is possible that they covered larger areas before they could finally settle in the places conventionally known to have been in their possession.

Saka in Indian Society

We may then infer that the Śakas had already been taken into the Indian social fold, in-as-much as that they were termed as an inferior variety of the Kṣatriyas. This might have been due to the absorbant nature of Indian society and the readiness of the Śakas to get themselves domiciled in a land which they occupied and which proved hospitable to them. Perhaps it was due to this homogeneity of reference in the ancient works that led Jaiswal to believe that "the word Kamboja in early Sanskrit literature and in Asoka's just possible that some branch of the Sakas fought against Satakarnis and conquered part of his empire. This would mean that the Sakas once, even though for a while, penetrated as far deep into India as Magadha. We shall take up this matter in the following pages in detail but here it would suffice to mention that there is no doubt about their presence in Mathura and in Ujjain. From the presence of the Sakas in these two places, we can safely infer that they had large territories under their control for a long time. It is possible that they covered larger areas before they could finally settle in the places conventionally known to have been in their possession.

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With all we know, from the sources mentioned in the foregoing pages, the problem of the origin of the Śakas remains unsolved. They were decidedly a foreign element in a society which could easily give them a local status. Unfortunately Indian sources are practically silent about their ethnic origin and their origional home.

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[1] J.B.O.R.S., 1930, p.229; Cf. Rahula's version in Madhya Asia ka Itihāsa.

[2] Vide ante, ~~p.~~ Chapter I.

Sakas in Greek Writers

Periplus.

The contemporary or near contemporary Greek writers place Śakas during this period in the neighbourhood of India. According to the Periplus,[1] the land of the Scythia is beyond Zarangiana, generally identified as the 14th Satrapy of Darius.[2] The entire description is vague, but it points towards the possibility that the Śakas at that time were settled somewhere in the north or northwest of Afghanistan.

Ptolemy

According to Ptolemy the Śakas were located to the east of the Sogdians[3] but he calls the entire area by the general name of Indo-Skythia[4] bringing India too into the picture. He gives a detailed description of Skythia and its important cities. Out of the important places mentioned by Ptolemy Syrastrene can easily be identified as Saurastra. Banagara has been identified as Bananagara or modern Bannu. He distributes the entire Indus valley into six groups and tries to locate about 41 places "which he specifies as belonging to

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1. Schoff, Parthian Stations, p.9.
2. ibid., p.32; also Thomas, J.R.A.S., 1906. pp.181 et seq., particulary p.185.
3. Mc Crindle, Ancient India, p.35.
4. ibid., p.136.

the Indus valley and its neighbourhood.[1] The convenient inferance from this account will be that the Śakas had already appeared on the Indian scene by the time of Ptolemy's writings.

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[1] ibid., pp. 136-141; also pp. ante. 19-22.

CHAPTER III

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The Śaka Rulers of Taxila

(a) Early period

As pointed out earlier, the Śakas were a conglomeration of tribes of different origins, who, even after fusion did not form a homogeneous community. However, in course of time they evolved a ruling class which branched out into several distinct dynasties of kings whose names have been preserved to us on coins discovered at different places in Arakhosia, Punjab, Sindh and Western India. The nomenclature of the early Śakas in India shows that they included diverse elements, such as Scythian, Parthian, and Iranian, mingled indistinguishably together, so much so that it is not always safe to label any particular dynasty as purely Parthian or Śaka.

The Chinese and western writers have traced the movement of the Sai Wang or the Śaka horde to Ki-Pin, or, to the conquest of Bactria. But beyond that scholars differ so much about the route of their immigration, that it has become a real cock-pit of controversy. Some would make us believe that they came from Seistan, through the Bolan Pass, into the valley of Sindh, from where they pushed to

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The Chinese and western writers have traced the movement of the Sai Wang or the Saka bands to Ki-Pin, or, to the conquest of Gandhāra, but beyond that scholars differ so much about the route of their immigration, that it has become a real mud-pit of controversy. Some would make us believe that they came from Sistan through the Bolan Pass, into the valley of Sindh, from where they pushed to the north to form independent kingdoms. Cunningham holds that "Śakas of Śakastan spread eastward and occupied the Indus Valley including Punjab and Sindh."[1] According to Rapson, the Śakas reached India indirectly through the Bolan Pass into the country of lower Indus and gave the Indus delta the name Scythia or Indo-Scythia. According to him the Śakas made Indo-Scythia their base and from there they moved up the valleys of the Indus and its tributaries to attack the Yavana kingdoms.[2] Konow[3] holds that the Śakas of Seistan made themselves independent of Parthia and started on a career of conquest which took them to the Indus valley. Codrington[4] and Tarn[5] also agree with Cunningham, Rapson and Konow in the opinion that the advent of these tribes into India took place from Seistan. Judging from the *Periplus*, Tarn concludes that a Scythian kingdom flourished on both sides of the Indus between 110 and 80 B.C.[6] and about

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1. *Coins of Indo-Scythians*, etc., Part II, p.2.
2. *C.H.I.*, Vol.I, p.564; also Cunningham, *Coins of Indo-Scythians*, etc., Part II, p.2.
3. Corpus, p.XXXVI, as cited by De Leeuw, *The Scythian period*, p.324; Sir John Marshal(*Taxila*, vol.I, p.45, footnote 6) holds that the invasion of Sindh was directly due to the pressure exerted by Parthia on Seistan during the reign of Mithradates II.
4. K. de B.Codrington, A geographical Introduction to the History of Central Asia, the *Geographical Journal*, Vol.CIV, London, July-August 1944, pp.27-40, and Sep-Oct. 1944, pp.73-91.
5. *Greeks in Bactria and India*, p.320.
6. ibid., p.320, also Thomas, Sakastana, *J.R.A.S.*, 1906. p.216.

80 B.C. the Śakas under their leader Moga (Maka) moved in a northernly direction under the pressure of the Parthians and conquered the Punjab. He holds that the copper plate inscription of the year 78, discovered at Taxila, must be dated as 77 B.C. and therefrom he draws the conclusion that Moga and his Śakas must have gone to the north before that date.[1]

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[1] The table printed in Professor Percy Gardner's British Museum Cat.of the Coins of the Greeks and Scythic kings of Bactria and India(p.XXXIII), with minor modifications and accessions may be read as follows:

About the middle of the 3rd century B.C., when the Seleucid rulers were preoccupied in the west, two eastern provinces were torn from their empire by rebel Satraps. One of these grew into the great power of Parthia, which ultimately absorbed nearly all the territory of the suzerain dynasty, and the other, the Graeco-Bactrain kingdom, founded by the Satrap Diodotus, enjoyed for a time a considerable success. Under the 3rd and 4th princes in the line, Demetrius and Eucratides, it crossed the Paropamisus and occupied the territory of Kabul and Afghanistan, and about as early the western Punjab. The dissensions of these two princes led to a double succession,one holding Kabul, perhaps with Bactria, and the other centred in the Punjab. The Greeks were at strife with all their neighbours, the Parthians in the west, the Sogdians in the north, the people of Herat, Drangiana and Arachosia in the west and south. The Indian line culminated during the middle and second half of the second century B.C. in the reign of Menander (King Milinda of the Budhist records).

An Indian source *Kālakāchāryakathānaka*, in Sanskrit as well as in Prakrit, to which already a reference has been made above, also confirms the invasion of the Śakas from *Seistan*. The story related there is of Kālaka, a Jain teacher, whose sister, a nun, was abducted by Gardabhilla, king of Ujjain.[1] To avenge this Kālaka sought aid from the Śakas - the Sagakula - whose vassals were called 'Śāhi' and their overlords 'Śāhānuśāhi', king of kings. Kālaka

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Either before or during the time of Menander, the first serious breach was made in the Greek dominions, Bactria being occupied by two successive inroads of barbarian invaders, Śakas or Scythians and Tochari or Kushana, from beyond the Jaxartes and from Chinese Turkestan,. Subsequently about the end of the century, the Scythian tribes, settled in Sakastan or Sistan, advanced to Arachosia and the Indus, overthrew the Greek power and established east and west of the river a dynasty distinguished in coinage and nomenclature, having Satrapies as far east as Mathura on the Jumna. The Greeks of Kabul maintained their independence.

In Sistan the Śakas had been adjacent, and possibly subordinate, to the expanding power of Parthia, and it is therefore not surprising that in their Indian dominion they were succeeded by a dynasty bearing distinctly Parthian names.

[1] Jacobi, H., *Das Kālakāchārya - Kathānakam*, Z.D.M.G., Vol.34, Leipzig, 1880, pp.262-267, (as cited by De Leeuw, *The Scythian Period*, Leiden, 1949, p.330; Bhau Daji, The Inroads of the Scythians into India and the story of Kālakāchārya, *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, Vol.IX, 1867-1870, Bombay, 1869, pp.139-146.

remained with them for some time and then went with 96 Śāhis who had fallen into disfavour with their king of kings, over the Indus to Kathiawar and then to the Ujjain region both of which countries they conquered and where they established a ruling dynasty. This is confirmed by the passage in several parts of Jain literature which Dr. K.P. Jayaswal has brought forward in his articles entitled the 'Problems of Śaka-Sātavāhana History' in the Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.[1]

So, as far as the advent of the Śakas in the valley of Sindh is concerned, there is no denying that a tribal horde called Śakas came through the Bolan pass to Sindh from where they pushed their way to Kathiawar and Ujjain. But the contention of Cunningham[2], Rapson[3], Konow[4] and Tarn[5] that one of their chiefs, Moga, led them to ~~them to~~ the valleys of the upper Indus and its tributaries has to face a number of objections,

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[1] Vol.XVI, 1930, pp.233-242.
[2] Coins of Indo-scythians, etc. Part II p.2
[3] C.H.I. Vol.I p.564.
[4] Corpus, p.XXXVI.
[5] Greeks in Bactria and India, p.321.

which cannot be easily brushed aside. The main objection is that all these writers have depended to a great extent on the *Periplus* and other Greek accounts, which they regard perhaps much more reliable than any of the Indian sources, inspite of the fact that the Greek works are based on a second hand information and hearsay rather than on actual facts. As a matter of fact it is impossible for an impartial reader to take their statements in their entirety. In this particular case, the *Periplus* is contradicted by another source the *Geography* of Ptolemy. In his list of Indo-Scythian towns Ptolemy includes some towns that lie far too north in the Punjab.[1] So Ptolemy tends to establish that Scythia, as Tarn, depending on the *Periplus*, would have us believe,[2] was not confined merely to the Indus delta, and we may safely infer that Śakas were already settled in the upper Indus region at the time of Ptolemy's writings.

The earliest epigraphic record of the Śakas, the one found at Maira, south of Taxila, in the Punjab, is dated in the year 58 of the old

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1. Ptolemy's *Geography*, VII, I.C, 55-66, (as cited by De Leeuw, The Scythian Period, p.327.)
2. *Greeks in Bactria and India.* p.320 and 321.

era, which date has been read by Cunningham[1] and accepted by Konow[2] as 71 B.C. This inscription is definitely of an earlier date than the Taxila Copper Plate inscription of the year 78 of the old era which Tarn takes to be the year 77 B.C.[3] and thereby infers that Moga and his Śakas must have been in Taxila and the Punjab before the year 77 B.C. What results from this is his opinion that the beginning of the old era was in 155 B.C. and that the place of origin of those who used this era was Seistan. If we accept his view that the beginning of the old era was 155 B.C. then the date of the Maira inscription would work out to 155-58 = 97 B.C. This will mean that Śakas were in the Punjab as early as 97 B.C. or even earlier. This would upset his own theory about the trek northward under the leadership of Moga in the year 77 B.C.[4] and would also cancel the researches done in the field so far. On this point De Leeuw's contention, who, assuming 129 B.C. as the initial date of the unknown era, fixes the

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[1] De Leeuw, *The Scythian Period*, p.326.

[2] ibid., p.326.

[3] *Greeks in Bactria and India* p.322.

[4] Tarn, ibid., pp.321-322.

date of the Taxila Copper Plate inscription as 51 B.C. seems more plausible as compared with the date given by Tarn.[1]

Granting that a Śaka horde entered the Indus delta through Bolan pass from Seistan, there still remains the probability that in northern Punjab there existed a Śaka element that was not connected in anyway with the Śakas from Seistan. 'Who could they be ?' and ' from where did they come ?' are the natural questions that have to be answered. Let us assume that a part of the Śakas, who lived in the plains of Jaxartes, swooped over the Hindukush, and descended over Punjab. We learn from the Chinese sources, as pointed out before, that the 'Sai-wang went southwards and made themselves masters of Chi-pin or Ki-pin. Chi-pin has been identified by some writers with Kashmir who hold that Śakas came to India from their northern home in the country of Jaxartes directly through Kashmir. This is difficult to accept because any direct invasion from the north through Kashmir would have to encounter physical

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[1] *The Scythian Period*, p. 326.

impossibilities.[1] It seems very improbable that a tribal horde, strong enough to defeat the powerful Yavana kingdom in the Punjab, should choose to come through such a difficult route as Kashmir. Rapson holds that 'the geographical difficulties of this region are such that an invasion from this direction by tribal hordes, sufficiently powerful to overwhelm the Yavana kingdom and to conquer the whole of North Western Frontier Province and the Punjab, is inconceivable.'[2]

Tarn rightly casts a doubt on the identification of Chi-pin as Kashmir and advances a number of forceful arguments to prove that Chi-pin means Kabul which is indeed much more probable. Rapson is of the opinion that Chi-pin or Ki-pin is a geographical term which is used in various senses by Chinese writers. In some cases it means Kapiśā or Kafiristan.[3] The Greeks called the river Kabul as Cophen,[4] and from this

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1. C.H.I. Vol. I p.563.
2. ibid., 563, Tarn, G.B.I., pp.277-278; also see the authorities quoted by Thomas, J.R.A.S., 1913, p.635, notes 1 and 2.
3. C.H.I. Vol. I p.567.
4. Arrian, Indica, Eng.Tr. McRindle, p.9.

region the Chinese writers meant the districts south of the Hindukush.[1] It thus appears that while some of the Sai-wang went south to Sakastan and its vicinities, a section of it either to escape pressure, or for some other reason, parted from the main tide, crossed the Hindukush, mingled with the tribes there and ultimately sought a new fatherland in the Punjab, the Śakas in Sakastan either because of the Bactrian kingdom, as is held by Konow,[2] or because of the wars with Mithradates II[3] were obliged to bid adieu to Bactria and seek a new home.

The only possible objection to this view can be that in the vast finds in the Kabul valley there is no trace whatever of the Śaka existence in the valley, which fact has compelled Rapson[4] to reject this probability. But it may be that the stay of the Śakas in the Kabul valley was so short that they could not leave any permanent traces behind. To this may be added the capital circumstance that the Śakas were on constant

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[1] De Leeuw, The Scythian Period, p.328.

[2] Corpus, p.XXXVI, as cited by De Leeuw The Scythian Period p.324.

[3] ibid., p.325.

[4] C.H.I. Vol.I. p.563.

move at the time and that their administrative machinery was so unstable that they could not issue any coins. It is significant that no coins have been found anywhere in Bactria and in their original home in the steppes.

The Rulers

Among the numerous Indo-Scythian chiefs, only four stand out as rulers of imperial status. They are :

1. Maues
2. Azes
3. Azilises
4. Azes II

Since their relative positions have been a subject of ardent reasoning among scholars it seems meet to examine the ground before accepting it.

MAUES

It is now universally accepted that the Śakas were responsible for liquidating the Indo-Greek principalities south of the Hindukush. After the Suren whom Mithridates II had put in command of the country east of the persian

desert, had thwarted the Śaka invasion of Parthia and recovered the country from Herat northward of Meru, the larger body of the invaders drawn together by Parthian pressure, had entered India from Seistan, while the victorious Parthians brought into subjection the previously existing Śaka state in 'Sacastene' or Sakastan on the lower Helmand. The victory of Suren took place sometime between 124 and 115 B.C. and the Śaka invasion of India may have begun anytime after c 120 B.C.[1] The route of the main body of the invaders is unknown, but if they started from 'Sacastene' or Sakastan they probably took the usual road which Craterus had once followed, i.e. by way of Kandhar and the Bolan or the Mulla Pass. In that case their first conquest would have been the satrapy of Abiria on the Indus then held by the Greeks.[2] Their kingdom extending from Abiria to Surastrene was their first possession in India and remained so long enough to find a place in Greek tradition. It is identical with Ptolemy's 'Indo-scythia'. The desert, had thwarted the Saka invasion of Parthia and recovered the country from Herat northward of Merv, the larger body of the invaders drawn together by Parthian pressure, had entered India from Seistan, while the victorious Parthians brought into subjection the previously existing Saka state in 'Sacastene' or Sakastan on the lower Helmund. The victory of Suren took place sometime between 124 and 110 B.C. and the Saka invasion of India may have begun anytime after c 120 B.C.[1] The route of the main body of the invaders is unknown, but if they started from 'Sacastene' or Sakastan they probably took the usual road which Craterus had once followed, i.e. by way of Kandahar and the Bolan or the Mulla Pass. In that case their first conquest would have been the satrapy of Abiria on the Indus then held by the Greeks.[2] Their kingdom extending from Abiria to Surastrene was their first possession in India and remained so long enough to find a place in Greek tradition. It is identical with Ptolemy's 'Indo-scythia'. The

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[1] G.B.I., pp.232 and 320.

[2] ibid., p.320.

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1. G.B.I., pp.499 and 500.
2. Ibid., p.320.

duration of this kingdom may be roughly fixed between 110 and 80 B.C.[1] According to this view they started about 80 B.C. from Abiria along the Indus up the stream to attack the Greek concentrations in the north, under a leader whose name is spelt in Greek epigraphs as Maues or Mauakes, and in the Kharoshthi as Moa or Moga.[2] A Śaka king Mauakes is known to have ruled in Ferghana in 101 B.C. If the Śaka rulers of Ferghana at this time belonged to the Sai-wang, Maues may be accepted to have been the leader of them some of whom must have come south with the Sacaraucae; Maue's power would support the Chinese assertions that the Sai-wang ultimately occupied and ruled 'Kipin'.[3] This view is in a way confirmed by Rapson and Tarn, who conclude that "Antialcidas was the last Indo-Greek king to rule all the three kingdoms west of the Jhelum, namely Taxila, Gandhara and Paropamisadai. On his death his realm was divided or broke up into parts. His successor in 'Taxila' was Archebius, who struck

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[1] ibid., pp.233, 380.

[2] ibid., p.406.

[3] ibid., p.277, F.N.6; Wylie, p.34.

a number of Tetradrachms and was certainly succeeded by the Śaka Maues."[1]

Maues was thus the earliest independent Scythian king of Indo-Scythia. He is not only known from his coins but also from a Taxila inscription dated in the year 78 of an era apparently of Scytho-Parthian institution.[2] There is reason to believe that the origin of Śakas in India was associated with Vonones. The Indian dominion of Maues seems to be clearly defined by the Indian types of many of his coins. As many as eleven out of his known twenty-two coin-types were issued in India. It has been rightly acclaimed that Maues was the leader of the Śakas about 120 B.C. and that he himself pushed forward from Sakastene to India, leaving Vonones in command behind him.[3] Maues remained content with his Indian dominion, leaving Vonones to rule Sakastene.

The coins reveal a fair few details about Maues. Certain well known coins from Punjab

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[1] Rapson, *C.H.I.*, pp.558-559; Herzfeld, *Sakastan*, p. 97.

[2] Sircar, *A.I.U.*, p.124.

[3] Cunningham, *Coins of Indo-Scythians*, Part II, p.3.

bring to light a king whose name is not written quite in agreement in the two classes of legends.[1] The Indian legends give the genitive 'Moasa' and yield the name Moa. The Greek legends give the genitive 'Mauous'. The nominative of the Greek name may have been either Mauos, Mauas, or Maues.

The record on the Taxila plate edited by Bühler[2] gives us the name of a king Moga. It comes from the same region where the coins of Moa or Maues were discovered and is similarly written in an Indian dialect and in the Kharoshthi characters. It is a record of the reign of Moga and is dated in the year 78 of an unspecified era, and on the fifth day of the Macedonian month Panemos. Dr. Fleet thinks that probably it was the first Panemos, in the reign of Moga and fixes his initial date early in the year 78 itself, or, at any rate, not earlier than the sixth day of Panemos of the year 77.[3]

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1. Dr. Fleet, J.R.A.S. 1907, p.1013 et.seq.
2. Dr. Fleet, J.R.A.S., 1907, p.1013;
   Rapson, CHI.Vol.I, p.570.
3. J.R.A.S., 1907, p.1014.

The precise date of Maues, however, cannot at present be determined. Different views have been advanced to fix a definite year in which king Moga or Maues may have reigned. The views are numerous. Here a score of them are being breifly quoted for ready reference and for elucidating the much debated point. The discussion may hazard a reopening of the problem but it seems imperative in order to achieve a political coherence.

1) In 1841, Wilson proposed a period B.C. 100 to 80 for Maues. He conjectured that he reigned at Bamian in Afghanistan or at Qundus in Afghanese Turkistan.[1]

2) In 1843, Cunningham proposed for Maues the period B.C. 135 to 110, and assigned to him first Patalene, Saurashtra (Kathiawad), and Larice and then Taxila, the territory of Porus and Cathaea in addition to those territories, but considered that in B.C. 105 he lost Taxila, to one of the Kadphises.[2]

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[1] Ariana Antiqua, p.313; as cited by Fleet, J.R.A.S., 1907, p.1014.

[2] J.R.A.S., 1907; p.1014.

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1) In 1841, Wilson proposed a period B.C. 100 to 80 for Manes. He conjectured that he reigned at Kandar in Afghanistan or at Gandhara in Afghanistan Turkistan.[1]

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1. Ariana Antiqua, p.310; as cited by Fleet, J.R.A.S., 1907, p.1014.
2. J.R.A.S., 1907, p.1014.

3) In 1852, Lassen assigned to Maues the period B.C. 120 to 100.[1]

4) In 1863 Dowson edited the Taxila plate but he did not offer any suggestion as to the identity of the king Moga or the nature of the era cited in the plate.[2]

5) The same year Cunningham came forward with his reading and translation of the Taxila record, and expressed the opinion that the Moga of the record was probably identical with the Moa or Maues of the coins and he accepted the year 163 B.C. as the actual date of occupation of Transoxiana by the Śakas. He thinks this event as the starting point of the era used by the Indo-Scythian Śakas and places the Taxila record in 163-78= 85 B.C. He further holds that Moga of the plate and Moa or Maues of the coins are identical.[3]

6) In 1886, Gardner,[4] thinking it impossible to place Maues at a later date than

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1. ibid.
2. ibid., p.1013.
3. A.S.I., Archaeological report for the year 1963-64, published in 1871, Vol.II, pp.54, 59 and 187.
4. B.M. Cat., Introduction, pp.33 and 40.

the middle of the first century B.C., selected B.C.70 as his initial date and apparently assigned to him a reign from then to about 35 B.C. He propounded the view that the statement in the Taxila record must denote the year, not of his reign, but of an era established by him.

7) In 1888 Cunningham suggested that the rule of Maues and his two successors Azes and Azilises, in the western Punjab, may have lasted from about B.C. 100 to the beginning of the Christian era.[1] In 1819, he varied the above calculation to about B.C. 100 to 20[2] and adopted Gardner's view that the year 78 of the Taxila record did not fall in the reign of Moga, but was the year of an era founded by him and treating Moga as identical with Moa or Maues, he fixed about B.C. 40 as the date of the Taxila record. In 1891, he again identifying Moga with Moa or Maues, credited him with the foundation of an era commencing either in B.C. 100 or 80.

8) Bhagwanlal Indraji in his treatment of the Taxila record, followed the view of Cunningham.[3]

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1. Coins of the Indo-Scythians, part I, p.44.
2. ibid., part II, p.8.
3. Dr. Fleet, J.R.A.S., 1907, p.1015.

9) Rapson in 1898 accepting as probable the identification of Moga with Moa or Maues held that the dynasty of Maues was the earliest of the Śaka dynasties in India, and that his date is not later than about B.C.120.[1]

10) In 1899 D.R. Bhandarkar,[2] rejecting the view that Maues founded an era, arrived at the conclusion that he was the last member of a Śaka dynasty founded by Vonones, who while establishing the dynasty also founded the so-called Śaka era and the year 78 of the Taxila record is the year 78 of that era. He assigned to Maues* Moga, the period A.D. 154-168 or years 76-90 of the Saka era.

11) In 1903 Smith[3] suggested that the Taxila record was dated not in the 78th year of era of Moga but in the reign of Moga himself and in the year 78 of a reckoning of some other kind- the Laukika or popular reckoning of Kashmir, the system of omitted hundreds. He fixed the initial date of Maues near about 120 B.C. and suggested

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1. ibid., also Indian Coins, c.29.
2. J.B.B.R.A.S., Vol.20, pp.292-293.
3. As cited by Dr. Fleet. J.R.A.S., 1907, pp.1020-103

that Moga was a Śaka king of Kabul and the Punjab. Then he came forth with several contradictory views, following each other so quickly that they need no comment while discarding them.

12) In 1907, Dr. Fleet,[1] while agreeing with Lassen, Rapson and others, in fixing the initial date of Moa or Maues in B.C. 120 or closely thereabout, differed from them, so far as the identification of Moga with Moa or Maues was concerned. He also differs from Gardner and Cunningham in the view that the year 78 of the Taxila or Sīr Sukh record does not fall in the reign of Moga, but is the 78th year of an era founded by him. He thinks that even if the text of the Taxila record were not itself clear enough, there are various other records which render unmistakable the point that it does not cite the 78th year of an era founded by Moga, but places the given day of the month Panemos of the year 78 in his reign.

13) In 1914, J.H.Marshal[2] came forward with the view that Maues ascended the throne of

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1. ibid., 1033-1038.

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Taxila about 95 B.C. and holds that the year 78 of his reign falls about 17 B.C.

14) Rapson[1] in 1922 identified with greater certainty king Moga of the Taxila copper plate inscription with the Maues of the coins. About its date he is of the opinion that "none of the Indian eras seems to be possible, and it may not unreasonably be suggested that the Śakas... like other foreign invaders at all periods, may have brought with them into India their own system of reckoning and this may be the era used in Seistan. The month in the inscription is Parthian and from this fact it may be inferred that the era itself is of probably Parthian origin. It may possibly mark the establishment of the new kingdom in Seistan after its incorporation into the Parthian Empire by Mithradates I, c 150 B.C. If so, the date of the inscription would be c 72 B.C., a year which may well have fallen in the reign of Maues."[2]

15) Tarn[3] is of the opinion that the date in the Taxila record is of an era instituted by the

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1. C.H.I., Vol. I, p.570.
2. ibid.
3. G.B.I., App.16, pp.500-502.

Śakas in 155 B.C., when they conquered one of the richest and the safest districts in Mithradate's empire. He holds that 'they can only... have dated their era from their acquisition of a good new country.'[1] He is of the opinion that 'this does not necessarily mean that they instituted their era in 155 B.C., they may have done that much later, just as nobody knows when either the Seleucid or the Arsacid era was actually instituted.'[2] Taking the year 155 B.C. as the initial point, he fixes the date of the Taxila inscription as 155 - 78 = 77 B.C.

16) Dr. K.P. Jayaswal taking the initial date of the unknown era in 123 B.C. fixes 46 B.C. as the date of the Taxila record.[3]

17) Sir John Marshal,[4] follows Rapson and Tarn, but agrees with Tarn in fixing the year 155 B.C. as the year when a Śaka era was started. He differs from Rapson on the point that the era has some Parthian origin and agrees with Tarn that it had a Śaka origin and that it commemorated the

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1. ibid., p.500.
2. ibid.
3. J.B.& O.R.S. Vol.XVI, 1930, pp.238-248.
4. Taxila, Vol.I, p.45.

settlement of Śaka immigrants in Seistan by Mithridates I about the year 155 B.C. He accepts the date given by Tarn for the Taxila plate and fixes 87 B.C. as the possible date for the Mansehra and Fatehjang records, and assuming that the settlement of the new Śaka kingdom had taken place some 2 or 3 years to accomplish, arrives at 90 B.C. as the approximate date when the last of the Greek kings of Taxila was overthrown by Maues.

18) M. Govind Pai[1] discards the name Moga of the Taxila inscription and for 'Mogasa' reads 'Magaasa'... ' of the month Magha.' He thinks that this relates to an intercalation of this month in 77-76 B.C. which makes the era start from 156-155 B.C. He refers this era to the usual imaginary Śaka conquest of Bactria.[2] He thinks that this event took place between 162 and 140 B.C.

19) Tarn, judging from his coins which strongly resemble the rare coins of Indo-Greek king Telephus minted in Kapisa, thinks that he must have lived about 60 B.C. or even earlier.[3]

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[1] Journal of Indian History, XIV, Part III, 1935, p.3

[2] Tarn, G.B.I. pp.283-4.

[3] ibid., pp.497-498.

20) De Leeuw[1] agrees with the opinion and supports it with additional arguments.

From the divergent views, given in brief above, it follows that the controvercial points are:

a) Whether Moga of the Taxila record is identical with the Moa or Maues of the coins ~~or not~~.

b) Era used in the Taxila inscription.

c) The date of Maues.

So far as the identification of Moga with Moa, Maues, is concerned, I think, there is no room for doubt. It has been largely accepted that king Maues of the coins was the same as king Moga of the inscriptions.[2] Dr. Fleet alone had doubts about the identification of Maues with Moga, but this has been refuted by De Leeuw with very sound and conclusive arguments.[3] The reasoning of Dr. Fleet is assertive rather than logical and I find no reason to support his view.

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[1] The Scythian Period p.337.

[2] Cunningham, J.A.S.B., Vol.32, 1863, pp.139-151.

[3] J.R.A.S., 1907, pp.1013-1040, esp. p. 1024; Review of Rapson's Ancient India, J.R.A.S., 1914, pp.797-799, Taxila Inscription of the year 136, p. 994.

Now about the era used by the writer of Taxila record. Any Indian era is out of question. Rapson thinks that it had a Parthian origin and marked the establishment of the kingdom of Seistan after its incorporation in the Parthian empire of Mithridates I which gets the year 150 B.C. As against this Tarn argues that that era must have had a Śaka and not a Parthian origin and that it commemorated the settlement of Śaka immigrants in Seistan by Mithridates I, about the year 155 B.C. Both the dates are very close to each other, the latter being more plausible. Sir John Marshal has abondoned his own datings in favour of these, particularly in that of Tarn.[1] The third view by Gardner argues that it was started by Moga himself. This, however, has been refuted by D.R. Bhandarkar while putting forth his own view that it was started by Vonones. De Leeuw holds that the era was started to commemorate the Śaka invasion of Parthia, which was quite certainly in 129 B.C.[2] Dr. K.P. Jayaswal makes it 120 B.C.[3] The generally

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1. Taxila, Vol.I, p.45.
2. Tarn, G.B.I., p.495.
3. J.B. & O.R.S., Vol.XVI, 1930, pp.238-248.

accepted view is that of Tarn, which has already been refuted in the forgoing pages on chronological and epigraphical basis. I agree with De Leeuw in fixing the initial date of this era in 129 B.C. It may be said that there is no authentic proof about the success of the Śakas in that year. But it is not usual to start eras to commemorate successes, sometimes even defeats are remembered, so that the future generations might take a lesson from them. An example may be found in the Mohammadan era Hijira, which was started to commemorate the year when the prophet was humiliated and forced to abandon Mecca. It may therefore be submitted that the incident of the Śaka invasion of Parthia, which may have been a rebellion against the Parthian domination, was a good enough cause to start an era. This date, moreover, accords well with the epigraphic evidence found at Maira.[1]

If we accept the year 129 B.C. as the initial date of the era used in various inscriptions of the period, it becomes very easy to assign a date to king Maues. From the date of the Taxila inscription it is evident that he was ruling in the year 129-78=51 B.C. Since

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[1] Cunningham, Coins of the Indo-Scythians, Part II, p.3.

he is the first known Śaka king, we can very easily infer that Maira, Manshera and Fetehjang inscriptions were also recorded in his reign. Thus we can fix his reign in view of the earliest of these inscriptions i.e. Maira Inscription to 129-58=71 B.C. Supposing that it took him some time to establish in Taxila it can be inferred that Maues came to the throne of Taxila sometimes in the first quarter of the 1st century B.C.

Extent of Maues' Empire

The Indian dominions of Maues seem to be plainly indicated by the Indian type of many of his coins, most of which refer directly to India.[1] There is no doubt about the fact that he was the leader of the Śaka conquest of Taxila. His coins are directly imitated from those of the Greek kings, who preceded him and thus afford a clear indication of the extent of his conquests. Sir John Marshal is of the opinion that after possessing himself of Taxila, Maues had the choice of either crossing the Jhelum and attacking the Greek kingdom in the Eastern Punjab or of crossing the Indus and attacking Gandhāra and the Paropamisada

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[1] Ibid.

He feels that Maues had political as well as other reasons for adopting the latter course; for one reason he may have wanted to make contact with the Parsii, who were also of the Śaka extraction; for another, he may have been anxious to extend his dominions upto the Hindukush so as to prevent the Yueh-Chi from establishing themselves south of that range and becoming a standing menace in the north. The generally accepted view is that of Rapson, which has been accepted by Marshal[1] also. Rapson infers from the numismatic evidence available, combined with the Taxila copper plate, that "Maues, conquered Gandhāra--Pushkalāvatī to the west of Indus as well as Takshaćilā, in the east... and it is possible that he may have invaded the Yavana dominions in the Eastern Punjab." But it is clear that in the direction last mentioned the Śaka conquests failed to reach their limit during his reign. Thus for a time, the remnants of the two Yavana houses in the upper Kabul valley and the eastern Punjab seem to have been separated by the Śaka dominions which lay between them in the valley of the Indus.[2] Tarn also agrees with

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1. Taxila, Vol.1, p.47.
2. C.H.I., Vol.1, p.570-571.

Rapson and writes, "Maues' conquest of Taxila and Gandhāra cut off the Greeks of the eastern Punjab from those of the Paropamisadae," but he thinks it likely that a few Greeks instead of coming under Śaka rule were driven out and they retreated up into the hills. So far as can be traced no Greek king ever became a Śaka vassal.[1] That Maues annexed Kāpiśā as well as Gandhara seems indicated not only by those coins of his, which show the 'Zeus enthroned' type of Kāpiśā copied from antecedent coins of Eucratides, Antialcidas and Telephus, but also by the fact that some of his coins actually bear the same peculiar moneyers' monograms as those of Telephus.[2] Tarn holds that since Maues ruled for a time in Kāpiśā, there is every probability that Alexandria also accepted his overlordship. It appears that the city probably retained a certain amount of autonomy in the usual way though it was ruled by an 'Epistates' (City Governor) appointed by Maues.[3]

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[1] G.B.I., p. 323.

[2] Whitehead, J.A.S.B. VI, 1910; Taxila, Vol.I, p.47.

[3] G.B.I., p.334.

Although it appears that the extirpation of the Indo-Greek kingdom of Eastern Punjab was left to his successor, the Śakas extended their power during Maues' rule as far as Mathura in the east.[1] Tarn holds that by about 60 B.C., probably before Maues died, the Śakas conquered Mathura and the Indian kings were supplanted by Śaka Satraps, the best known being Rajubula, Soḍāśa, Hagāmāśha and Hagāna.[2]

Thus it appears that after possessing himself of Taxila, Maues led his victorious armies as far as Gandhāra, Kāpiśā and Alexandria in the west and Mathura in the east. Towards the north his dominions might have touched the feet of the Himalayas, thus creating a sort of ridge between the Indo-Greek principalities of east Punjab and Kabul. Apparently the Śakas never held any possessions in the Kabul valley, but they probably held Ghazni, which would account for some of their coins being found about Kabul.[3] Extent of his

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[1] Sircar, *A.I.U.*, p.136.

[2] Tarn, *G.B.I.*, p.325; C.H.I., p.526.

[3] Cunningham, *Coins of Indo-Scythians, etc.*, Part I, p.45.

dominion towards the south is still an unsolved problem, but it is quite evident that his commands were respected over a fairly large territory though the work of extirpation of the eastern Greek kingdoms was left to his successors.

Coins: Titles of Maues

Maues' coins are found in considerable number in the Western Punjab and Gandhāra and exhibit a variety of types, thus indicating a long reign.[1] As a general rule his coins are copied from those struck by princes of both the Yavana houses.[2] Monograms on some of his coins are copied from the coins of Greek king Telephus, who appears to have been his immediate predecessor.[3] Marshal thinks that he started issuing coins very soon after his occupation of Taxila.[4] He rules out the probability that Maues struck coins in Sindh before coming into possession of the Greek mint at Taxila, since the types of his earliest coins seem to indicate that he was already in possession

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1. Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.45.
2. Rapson, C.H.I., Vol.I, pp. 586-592, pl.VI, 2,9,12, pl.VIII, 48.
3. Tarn, G.B.I., p.332, also App.16, pp.496-497.
4. Taxila, Vol.I. p.45.

of the Greek dominions between the Jhelum and the Indus.[1]

It would be tempting to ascribe these early coins of Maues to the kingdom of Indo-Scythia and to suppose that they were struck in the Demetrias-Patala, which was still a Greek city in the third quarter of the first century B.C. as is evident from the Nasik Cave inscription No.19. But this seems improbable because of the absence of the coins of his predecessor. So the early coins of Maues must be taken to have been struck after he got control of the Taxila mint. These coins are of the following types:

1. the standing Appollo and tripod of Appollodotus
2. an exact copy of the elephant's head of Demetrius
3. the trotting horse which had first appeared on later imitations of Heliocles.[2]

These coins indicate that Maues had a complete control over all the Greek dominions west of the Jhelum.

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[1] Ibid., pp.45-46.

[2] Marshal, *Taxila*, Vol.I. p.46, footnote 1; Tarn, *G.B.I.*, p.322; B.M.*Cat*, p.68, No.1, pl.XVI, 1; p.13. No.6, pl.V, 3 p.72 No.28.

One of his coins shows Poseidon with his trident, trampling on a river god.[1] On another coin Poseidon while he still tramples on the river god, hurls his thunderbolt at a small figure clinging on an Aphlaston, the stern erection of presumably a sinking gally.[2] These coins have been taken to indicate a victory of Maues' fleet over a Greek fleet.

His coins are earliest in style and the metal used is generally copper. In the form of Greek letters, engraved on them and the style of art, they are superior not only to those of Hermaeus but also to those of Zoilus and Nicias.[3] But in all cases they are a copy of the Greek coins.

The main find-spots of Maues' coins are Taxila and the country between the Indus and the Chenab rivers.[4] But a few have been found in Gazni, Gandhāra and Kapiśā too.

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1. B.M.Cat., p.70, No.15 pl.XVII, 1.
2. ibid., p.71, No.17, pl.XVII, 2.
3. ibid. Intro., p.40.
4. Cunningham, *Coins of Indo-Scythians*, etc., Part I, p.44.

Successors of Maues

The date of Maues' death is as uncertain as any other event related to him. For some time the generally accepted view has been that he died and was succeeded by Azes I in 58 B.C. Confirmation of this date, so far as Azes I was concerned, seems to be furnished by two inscriptions at Taxila which are dated in the year 134 and 136 of Azes.[1] Tarn is of the opinion that Maues' death synchronised with the rising which placed Amyntas on the throne of Alexandria.[2] He thinks that this event followed promptly after the death of Maues and that he was certainly dead before Hermaeus' conquest of Paropamisadae. He fixes his death around 60 B.C. He attempts to connect his death with the Śaka conquest of Ujjain from where they were defeated and driven out in the year 58 B.C. by the Indian king Vikramāditya who commemorated the event by establishing the Vikram Era.[3] The Jain tradition of Kālakācharya-Kathānaka makes this first Śaka

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[1] Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, pp.48, 256 and 327.

[2] G.B.I., p. 335.

[3] ibid.; C.H.I., Vol.I, p.168.

Succession of Azes

The date of Azes' death is as uncertain as any other event related to him. For some time the generally accepted view has been that he died and was succeeded by Azes II in 58 B.C. Confirmation of this date, so far as Azes I was concerned, seems to be furnished by two inscriptions of Taxila which are dated in the year 134 and 136 of Azes.[1] Konow is of the opinion that Azes' death synchronised with the rising which placed [illegible] on the throne of [illegible].[2] He thinks that this event followed promptly after the death of Azes and that he was certainly dead before Gondophares' conquest of Paropamisadae. He fixes his death around [illegible] A. He attempts to connect his death with the Saka conquest of Ujjain from where they were ousted and driven out in the year 58 B.C. by the Indian king Vikramaditya who commemorated the event by establishing the Vikrama era.[3] The late tradition of [illegible] [illegible] this event [illegible]

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1. Marshall, Taxila, Vol.I, p.[illegible], [illegible] and [illegible].
2. C.I.I., p. [illegible].
3. Indian Culture, Vol.[illegible], p.[illegible].

rule in Ujjain last for four years only. Tarn thinks that the only person who could have been responsible for the conquest of Ujjain in about 62-61 B.C. was Maues and assumes that the reconquest of that city by Vikramāditya four years later either followed on his death or itself resulted in his death in 58 B.C.[1] Marshal rightly differs from Tarn in this assumption which is in direct conflict with the Jain account in the aforesaid *Kathānaka*.[2] If we accept the Jain story at all, and there seems no adequate grounds for rejecting it, we cannot surely ignore the essential parts of it.[3] Thus we find that Tarn's attempt to link the Śaka conquest of Ujjain with

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1. Tarn, ibid.

2. Marshal, *Taxila* Vol.I p.51.
According to this *Kathānaka*, Ujjain was attacked and overcome by certain feudatory 'Śāhis' of the Śaka king (might be Maues) who were in disgrace with their overlord, whose orders presumably, they defied. After making Gardabhilla... king of Ujjain, a prisioner, these 'Śāhis' proceeded to elect one of them as 'Rāyādhirāya'... that is supreme over-lord. This might be noted that the elected head of these 'Śāhis' was given the title of 'Rāyādhirāya' and not 'Kshatrapa' or 'Mahakshatrapa' which they should have done if they had recognised Maues as their 'Suzerain'.

3. ibid.

the death of Maues in 58 B.C., falls to the ground. Marshal thinks that Maues' death might have taken place any time prior to the assumption by Vonones of the imperial title, which he thinks happened in 53 B.C.; and this date sounds more correct.

The matter of succession of Maues is a problem in itself. There is no clear historical evidence to establish the line of Maues' succession. Numismatic evidence suggests that Maues was succeeded by Azes. The general view was that he was succeeded by Azes just after his death which occurred in 58 B.C.[1] This view has been challenged by Tarn.[2] Marshal has accepted Tarn's view though he has shown some doubts as regards Tarn's dates and other inferences.[3] Tarn holds that Maues died about 58 B.C., and the circumstances that followed his death show that Maues' swiftly won empire broke down or broke up on his death.[4] It is reasonable to believe that Maues' empire evidently depended upon a single personality and had not

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1. Rapson, *C.H.I.*, Vol.I, p.571.
2. *G.B.I.*, pp.335-336.
3. *Taxila*, Vol.I, p.50.
4. *G.B.I.*, pp.335-336.

yet time to become consolidated. The Chinese noticed that the Sakas were composed of various peoples and normally formed separate kingdoms, which means that anyone who attempted to weld them into an empire would have to reckon with strong fissiparous tendencies.[1] Maues seems to have been the ruler of a small tribe and belonged to Sai-Wang,[2] to whom many tribes, sometimes larger than his own tribe, owed allegiance. So it was natural enough that an empire based on fissiparous tendencies, cemented by the personal strength of an individual, should collapse when its 'one man strength' was snatched away.

Tarn is of the opinion that Azes I succeeded Maues some 27 years after his death and he quotes a story related in the 'T'sien-han-shu'.[3] The story runs as under:

W'ou-ti-lao, king of Ki-pin, killed some Chinese envoys. After his death his son, whose name is not given, dispatched an envoy to China with gifts, naturally to establish good relations,

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1. ibid.
2. ibid., p.321.
3. ibid., p.339 et. seq.

and Wen-Chung, the Chinese general at the barrier, was sent to escort the envoy home. W'au-ti-lao's son plotted to kill Wen-Chung but the latter discovered the plot and allied himself with Yin-mo-fu, son of the king of Yung-kin; the two together then attacked Ki-pin and killed W'ou-ti-lao's son, and Yin-mo-fu was installed as king of Ki-pin, receiving the seal and ribbon of investiture; this shows that Wen-Chung installed him as king but as a vassal of China.[1]

The names in the story have been identified by Tarn, following Von-Gutschmid's interpretation in Geschichte Irans, pp.109, 110, as follows:

1) Yin-mo-fu is Hermaeus,

2) Ki-pin is Kophen,

3) Yung-kin is Yonaki, .."Greek town".[2]

W'ou-ti-lao has not been explained beyond saying that he was a Śaka. Wylie in the Journal of the Anthropological Institute has identified the word 'W'ou-ti-lao.'[3] He takes W'ou-ti-lao for a Greek title meaning "brother of the king" by which Spalyris (Spalahores) and Spalirises are designated on their coins.

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[1] ibid., pp.339-340; Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.48.
[2] G.B.I., p.340; Marshal, ibid.
[3] Vol.X, No.1, (1880), p.36; Marshal, ibid.

Tarn, accepting these identifications, has reconstructed the history as follows:

Spalyris was the Śaka governor of Ki-pin or Kabul[1] under the suzerainty of the Parthian Great King of Kings Vonones,[2] who cannot have been Maues' successor as his name is Parthian,[3] though he eventually succeeded him and took the title "Great King of Kings" left vacant by his death.[4] Spalyris was Vonones' vassal in Arachosia and Kabul.[5] On some of his coins,[6] Spalyris acknowledges Vonones as his suzerain and does not call himself a king. But on another series,[7] which does not mention Vonones, he calls himself, "King's brother".[8] Tarn thinks that he could not have been a real brother of Vonones, as Vonones was a Parthian. He thinks it to be

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[1] Marshal, ibid., p.49; Tarn, G.B.I., p.341.

[2] Tarn, ibid., p.344; Marshal, ibid., p.49.

[3] Tarn, ibid., p.345.

[4] ibid., p. 346.

[5] ibid.

[6] B.M.Cat. p.98, No.1-7 pl.XXI,7,8,9, p.173 No.1

[7] ibid., p.100, Nos. 1 & 2, pl.XXII, No.1

[8] Tarn, ibid., pp.345-46.

merely a title of honour which had long been in use at the Hellenistic courts, which might have been adopted by the Parthians.[1]

Marshal[2] agrees with Tarn that Spalyris and Spalirises were not actual blood brothers of the Parthian Vonones, and endorses the view of Tarn that somewhere about 49 B.C., Spalagadames, the son of Spalyris, was killed by Hermaeus, son of Amyntas, the Greek king of Alexandria, with the help of a Chinese General or, perhaps, a Yueh-Chi chief. Spalagadames was succeeded by Spalirises who overthrew Hermaeus and, perhaps, revolted and defeated Vonones and took the title of "King of Kings" which he conferred on his son, Azes I.[3] On the information supplied by the Chinese writer Pan-ku, Tarn infers that by 49 B.C. the Śaka realm of Ki-pin was independent of the Parthian Suren in Seistan (O-ik-san-li of the Chinese).[4] He is of the opinion that this Śaka realm must be that of the Azes dynasty and he thinks that Maues is too early.[5]

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[1] ibid., p.345.

[2] Taxila, p.49.

[3] ibid.; also Tarn, G.B.I., pp.341-346, esp. 346.

[4] Tarn, ibid., pp.346-347.

[5] ibid., p.347.

Thus the chronology arrived at by Tarn and accepted by Marshal would be as under:

MAUES
succeeded by
Vonones (Parthian Suren of Seistan)
SPALYRIS (Spalahores)
(Vassal of Vonones in Arachosia)
SPALAGADAMES
(Overthrown and killed by Hermaeus)
SPALIRISES
(Ruled conjointly with his son Azes)
AZES I
AZILISES
AZES II
(Overthrown by Parthian Suren Gondophernes)[1]

Rapson's view is remarkably different from the above inferences. He thinks that Azes I succeeded Maues just after his death in 58 B.C., and he takes Azes, son of Spalirises, to be Azes II. He also suggests that Azes I and

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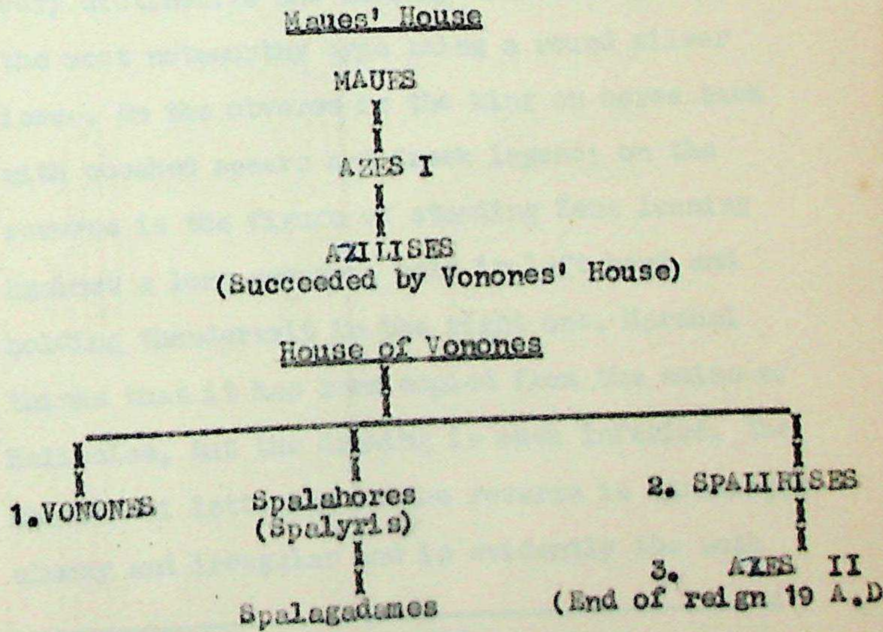
[1] Tarn, ibid., pp.341-350; Marshal, *Taxila*, p.50.

Azilises preceded Vonones and that Spalahores (Spalyris) and Spalirises were real brothers of Vonones. He further thinks that Spalirises with Azes as his junior were viceroys or vassals of Vonones. He rightly supposes that Azes was son of Spalirises but makes him to be Azes II. Thus he separates the house of Maues from that of the house of Vonones, which ultimately succeeded in the Indian dominions of Maues and his family. He gives the following chronological order of succession :


Maues' House

House of Vonones

MAUES
AZES I
AZILISES
(Succeeded by Vonones' House)
1. VONONES
Spalahores
(Spalyris)
Spalagadames
2. SPALIRISES
3. AZES II
(End of reign 19 A.D

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1. C.H.I., Vol. I, pp.572-574.

Tarn has raised a number of objections to Rapson's scheme, the most convincing one being the numismatic obstacle.[1] It concerns the series of coins struck by these rulers such as :

1. Vonones with Spalirises,
2. Vonones with Spalagadames,
3. Spalirises with Azes,
4. Azes alone,
5. Azes and Azilises.[2]

All these coins form a small, very distinctive and closely connected group, the most noteworthy type being a round silver issue. On the obverse is the king on horse-back with couched spears and Greek legend; on the reverse is the figure of standing Zeus leaning against a long scepter, held in left hand and holding thunderbolt in the right one. Marshal thinks that it has been copied from the coins of Heliocles, but the drawing is much inferior. The Kharoshthi lettering on the reverse is strikingly clumsy and irregular and is evidently the work

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[1] Tarn, G.B.I., pp. 344-346.

[2] B.M.Cat. pp.72-92, 98-102; Cunningham, Coins of the Indo-Scythians, etc., Part II, pp.34-39 pl.IV, Nos.1-4, 9, 11, 12; pl.V, Nos. 1-4 and 4a.

of an engraver unaccustomed to the Kharoshthi alphabet.[1] The strange looking figure of Zeus, described above, is found only on the coins bearing the names of

1. Vonones and Spalahora (Spalyris),
2. Vonones and Spalagadames,
3. Spalirises and Azes, and
4. Azes alone.

Evidently this must have been the work of one and the same engraver. If we accept Rapson's sequence of rulers, viz. Azes I, Azilises, Vonones, Spalahores, Spalagadames, Spalirises and Azes II, the Zeus figure referred to above ought to have been found on the issues of Azilises from which it is conspicuously absent. On the other hand Tarn's sequence of rulers, .. viz. Vonones, Spalahores, Spalagadames, Spalirises, Azes I, Azilises and Azes II, accords perfectly well with the numismatic evidence. There might have been an engraver who was responsible for this figure, who might have died in the reign of Azes I and hence the absence of the figure on the coins

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[1] Marshal, *Taxila*, Vol.I, p.49 et. seq.

of Azilises and Azes II.[1] So we may conclude that Vonones succeeded Maues in his dominions in Eastern Iran and Arachosia whereas his Indian dominions remained uncontrolled for some time. Marshal, depending on some coins found in the early Śaka levels in Sir Kap (Taxila), assumes that Vonones was recognised as the ruling sovereign in Taxila with Spalahores and Spalagadames acting as his legates.[2] But this must have been for a very short time. There is no historical evidence to prove that Spalahores and Spalagadames ever assumed any royal title. So the next sovereign to assume any royal title was Spalirises who associated his son Azes in the administration.

From Azes onwards the sequence of rulers is very clear. Azes was succeeded by Azilises, who was followed by Azes II. Azes II was overthrown by the Parthian overlord Gondopharnes some time in 19 A.D.

It is difficult with our present scanty information to assign with any degree of

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1. ibid., pp.49-50.
2. ibid., p.51.

certainty the countries over which Vonones and the house of Spalahores reigned. Cunningham is inclined to place them at the Śaka Capital of 'Sigal' which he identifies with 'Shal' or 'Kotta' (Vulgo Quetta), the 'Kottabara' of Ptolemy.[1] From the findspots of the coins of these rulers obtained by Col.Stacy and Captain Hutton and following Masson, Cunningham thinks that their dominions would have embraced the Gandhara valley and perhaps also Ghazni, while the Kabul valley was still held by some of the later Greeks.[2] Tarn on the other hand thinks that along with Ghazni, Kabul was also included in their dominions and thinks that these Śakas might have had something to do with the break up of the kingdom of Antialcidas.[3] Ptolemy calls them Parsii and places them in Paropamisadae along with Kabul and also gives the names of two villages in that country, Parsia and Parsiana.[4]

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[1] Coins of Indo-Scythians, etc., Part II. p. 7.

[2] ibid.

[3] Tarn, G.B.I., pp.331, 332.

[4] Ptolemy, VI, 18. (As cited by Tarn, ibid., p.332, also see p.469.)

Tarn thinks that the centre of their power was Ghazni and Kabul.[1]

Spalirises

According to Tarn Spalirises, in about 27 B.C., seized whatever of Vonones' power he could and took the title of 'Great King' which he also conferred on his son, Azes,[2] and struck coins on the obverse of which he was described as 'Great King' in Greek legend whereas on the reverse Azes was described 'Great King' in Kharoshthi legend.[3] This coin seems to indicate that the overlordship of Vonones was at an end.

Tarn is of the opinion that this happened when Spalirises put an end to Hermaeus' kingdom sometime near 30 B.C.,[4] when the latter was left without the help of the Chinese under Yuan-ti. Tarn further holds that Spalirises was responsible for the final overthrow of the Greek power in Paropamisadae. Marshal has, however, raised a

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1. Tarn, ibid., also see App.9.
2. C.B.I., p.346.
3. Tarn, ibid., footnote; B.M.Cat., p.102.
4. Tarn, ibid., p.350; Rapson, C.H.I., pp.562 & 574

number of objections to Tarn's conclusions and thinks that Spalirises took the imperial title immediately after the death of Vonones in 40 B.C. or even earlier and commemorated the fact by issuing the coins bearing the 'Zeus enthroned' type.[1] He contends that "had Spalirises really overcome Hermaeus and put an~~d~~ end to the Greek kingdom in the Paropamisadae, it is surely strange that he should have made no use of the excellent mint at Kapisi". It appears that the date given by Marshal is nearer the exact year of Spalirises' assumption of imperial title in some parts of Vonones' empire. The most reasonable assumption would be that if at all he conquered Hermeaus' dominions he did it after consolidating his own strength as a great king.

He ruled with his son Azes as joint king. Tarn thinks that he himself must have ruled in the west of his realm with Azes as his co-ruler in the east.[2] But Marshal thinks

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1. Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.52.
2. Tarn, G.B.I., p.347.

that he played no part in the history of Taxila.[1] He thinks that Spalirises had a shorter reign and he must have died soon after he became emperor.[2]

Azes I

After Maues the next outstanding figure among the Śakas was Azes I. He was a son of Spalirises. From his coins it is inferred that he ruled with his father as a joint king.[3] Dr.D.C. Sircar is of the opinion that he was the son-in-law of Maues;[4] but there is no historical evidence to back this view. However, it is true that he succeeded Maues in his dominions in India.

His coin finds, notably coins burried beneath the foundations of the stupas, connect him with Taxila and Pusakalāvatī, and Tarn is of the opinion that the entire realm was divided in two parts, the father ruling the western and the son the eastern one.[5]

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[1] Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I. p.52

[2] ibid.

[3] Tarn, G.B.I., p.347.

[4] A.I.U., p.126.

[5] Tarn, ibid., p.347

His earlier coins associate him as Great king with his father, the title that his father also used. Subsequently both father and son appear with the title 'Great King of Kings'.[1] Tarn holds that father and son were both 'Great King of Kings' at the same time as they had been 'Great Kings' at the same time. He thinks that when Spalirises took the title 'Great King of Kings', he conferred the same title on his son and co-ruler Azes, which Azes also did subsequently on his own son Azilises.[2] Because of this Seleucid practice, where father and son appear as co-equals, the reign of three kings of this dynasty, namely, Spalirises, Azes and Azilesis, overlap to an unknown extent. Thus it is very difficult to assign Azes any date. Tarn holds that Azes must have had the title of 'Great King of Kings' by 30 B.C. at the very latest,[3] though it does not mean that his father was dead in this year. Rapson,[4] connecting Azes with the Vikrama era of the year 58 B.C., takes that year

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[1] ibid., B.M.Cat., p.102, No.1
[2] G.B.I., p.348.
[3] ibid., p.345 et. seq.
[4] C.H.I., Vol.I, p.571.

His earlier coins associate him as Great King with his father, the title that his father also used. Subsequently both father and son appear with the title 'Great King of Kings'.[1] Tarn holds that father and son were both 'Great King of Kings' at the same time as they had been 'Great Kings' at the same time. He thinks that when Spalirises took the title 'Great King of Kings', he conferred the same title on his son and co-ruler Azes, which Azes also did subsequently on his own son Azilises.[2] Because of this Seleucid practice, where father and son appear as co-equals, the reigns of three kings of this dynasty, namely, Spalirises, Azes and Azilises, overlap to an unknown extent. Thus it is very difficult to assign Azes any date. Tarn holds that Azes must have had the title of 'Great King of Kings' by 30 B.C. at the very latest,[3] though it does not mean that his father was dead in this year. Marshall,[4] connecting Azes with the Vikrama era of the year 58 B.C., takes that year

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1. I.M.C., Whitehead, p.144, No.7
2. G.B.I., p.345.
3. Ibid., p.349 fn. 202.
4. C.H.I., Vol.I, p.574.

to be the initial year of Azes. In support of this date he has advanced epigraphic evidence and has formulated the rule of square omicron.[1] However, he himself has shown some doubts about this rule of square Omicron when he says, "This chronological test, however, must be applied with caution. Isolated instances occur earlier, and the squared forms of the Greek letters □, ⊏ and ш are characteristic of certain regions. In other regions they are not found".[2] This view of Rapson, following Konow, has been challenged by De Leeuw,[3] who has given the date of Azes' reign about 50-30 B.C.[4] She quotes Konow's date as 49-27, and says that it coincides with the date suggested by her.[5] Marshal, from the coins found in Taxila, not only deduced that Azes' coins immediately follow those of Maues, but also that they date from the third quarter of the 1st century B.C.[6]

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1. ibid., p.571.
2. ibid.
3. The Scythian Period, p.351.
4. ibid. p.350.
5. ibid.
6. The Date of Kanishka, J.R.A.S., 1914, pp. 973-986, esp. p.977.

My objection to these datings is that they do not tally with the date of the death of Maues arrived at in the foregoing pages; they do not take into account the state of affairs that prevailed over the Śaka empire after the death of Maues. Maues died in about 53 B.C., and soon after his death his swiftly won empire collapsed; and it must have been after a good deal of hard fighting that Azes restored the lost territories. This involves time. So I think, though he may have assumed his titles immediately after assumption of the royal title and dignities by his father from Vonones in the year 40 B.C., he must have had to wait for some time to acquire sovereignty over the empire of Maues. Tarn thinks that he succeeded Maues some 27 years after his death, and, assuming that Maues died in 57 B.C., gives the date of Azes' succession as 30 B.C.[1] This seems to me far too much. This initial date is very near 35 B.C. This is supported by his victory over Hippostratus, probably about 30 B.C.[2]

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[1] G.B.I., pp.335-336 and 347.

[2] Tarn, ibid., pp.349 and 350.

Surely he must have taken some time to gather strength to attack Hippostratus.

Extent of Dominions

It is to this king that Marshal attributes the conquest of East Punjab from the Greeks of Sākala, and also the conquest and annexation of Paropanisadae after the down-fall of Hermaeus.[1] "His coins bear types which are obviously borrowed from those of the former Yavana princes".[2] Thus these coins establish that he was responsible for the extinction of the Greeks from the Punjab and Gandhāra. The "Goddess and the Indian Bull" type of his coins, the characteristic of the city of Puṣkalāvatī,[3] show that the city was under his control; and the "Athene Alkis" type of Menander, particularly associated with the house of Euthydemus at Sākala,[4] show that he had something to do with the downfall of that house. The presence of the moneyers' monograms used by Hippostratus on his

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[1] Taxila, Vol. I, p.52.

[2] ibid.

[3] B.M.Cat., p.85, No.137, pl.XIX, No.5.

[4] Cunningham, Coins of Indo-Scythians, etc., Part II, p.41, pl.V, Nos.11 & 11 a; B.M.Cat., pp.79, Nos. 56-70, pl.XVIII, Nos.2,3 & 4.

coins further leads us to believe about his conquest towards east of the river Jhelum.[1] Poseidon with his trident appears on one of his coins,[2] and Poseidon with his trident trampling upon a river-god on another,[3] evidently a copy of the similar types of Maues. These coins lead us to believe that the Śaka fleet defeated Hippostratus' fleet on the Jhelum and this victory gave Azes control of the river and a way across it.[4]

Thus after Maues, he had a career of conquests and he was able to establish himself and his house on the territories of Maues as well as the territories of the Greeks. But, as we shall presently see, his conquests were as short-lived as those of his predecessor, and after 55 years of his accession, i.e. in 19 A.D., we find that his territories were being ruled by a Parthian King named Gondophernes.

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1. Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I., p.53.
2. B.M.Cat., p.77, No.55, pl.XVIII, No.1; Cunningham, N.C., 1890, p.142, No.x,7.
3. Cunningham, ibid.; B.M.Cat., p.89, Nos.181-4 pl.XIX, 10.
4. Tarn, G.B.I., p.349.

The date of his death is still a mystery and so far no historical evidence is available to establish it. This can be very easily inferred from the variety of coinage issued by him, that he had a fairly long reign.

Successors of Azes I

There is almost unanimity of opinion that Azes was succeeded by Azilises, who was followed by Azes II.[1] Numismatic evidence shows that Azilises was associated in Government with two kings of the name 'Azes', "possibly with his father and predecessor at the beginning of his reign and with his son and successor at its close".[2] On some coins which are issued jointly by these sovereigns both of them bear the imperial title 'Great King of Kings', but Azes as the elder occupies the place of honour on the obverse with Greek legend.[3] On other coins both these names occur with the same title but with a change of positions, Azilises occupying the obverse with Greek legend and Azes the reverse with Kharoshthi legend.[4] This is a clear indication

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1. C.H.I. Vol.I, p.572; Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.53.
2. C.H.I., ibid.
3. B.M.Cat., p.173, Nos.1 & 2, pl.XXXII, No.9; also see C.H.I., Vol.I, p.572.
4. B.M.Cat., p.92, No.1, pl.XX; 3; C.H.I., ibid.

of the fact that there were two Azes, one was the predecessor of Azilises and the other his successor.

But for the following reasons advanced by Marshal[1] and Rapson,[2] the existence of the second Azes might well be questioned:

1. The coins that bear the name of Azes show so great a diversity of style that it is natural to suspect that two different kings were responsible for their mintage.[3]

2. The coins which have been assigned to Azes II are found generally nearer the surface than those of Azes I.[4]

3. From the coins it appears that Aspavarmā was a 'Strategos' in the reign of Gondophernes as well as Azes, and it is impossible to believe that this Azes was Azes I who occupied the throne much earlier.[5]

Judging from their abundant coinage, Sir John Marshal is of the opinion that the reign

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1. J.R.A.S., 1914, p.979.
2. C.H.I., Vol.I, p.572.
3. ibid.
4. Marshal, J.R.A.S., 1914, p.979.
5. ibid; Whitehead; Pb.M.Cat., Lahore, Vol.I, p.150, Nos. 35-38, also footnote (cited from Marshal).

of Azilises and Azes II must have been fairly long; and assigns 10 B.C. and A.D. 5 respectively as the dates when these monarchs might have ascended the throne.[1]

Dr. Sircar is of the opinion that due to the Scytho-Parthian struggle during the last years of his reign, Azes II was forced to take shelter with the Kuṣāṇas who possibly drove out the Parthians from Gandhāra region, and that he was reduced to the position of a mere protege of the Kuṣāṇas and was probably never again in actual possession of his lost kingdom.[2] If this view is accepted, we may easily infer that Azes II might be living and in constant struggle in the year A.D. 19, which is the established date for the Parthian King Gondophernes. But there is no evidence to show that he was ever successful against the Parthians who continued to rule for a pretty long time.

Azes II was overthrown by Parthian king Gondophernes who came to the throne in or about 19 A.D.[3]

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1. Taxila, Vol.I, p.53.
2. A.I.U., p.130.
3. Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, pp.58-59.

(b) ŚAKA SATRAPS

A number of coins and inscriptions discovered from various cites have brought to light certain rulers designated as "Kṣatrapa" or "Satrap" and "Mahā Kṣatrapa" or "the Great Satrap". The use of the Greek title "Strategos", meaning "Lord of the army", suggests that originally perhaps it was a rank in the Śaka army which gradually developed into a civil institution. In the civil administration these Satraps appear to have been feudal lords, appointed by their Śaka over-lords to administer the conquered people. Originally they were viceroys or governors with fairly autonomous status but gradually they became more or less independent, and powerful enough to issue coins of their own.

Though the institution appears to have been started only as an administrative measure, it seems to have continued for a long period. Gradually a house of Satraps assumed regal powers and ruled over a large territory in Western India for a considerably long time.

According to Dr. Sircar the word 'satrap', meaning a provincial governor, is derived

from pseudo-Sanskrit 'Kṣatrapa' (Prakrit 'Chhatrave', 'Chhatrapa' of the pseudo Sanskrit royal title 'Chhatrapati') which is the same as old Persian 'Kshathrapāvan'. Undoubtedly the term was originally used to designate the governor of a province in the empire of the Achaemenian emperors. In India a more dignified title 'Mahā-Kṣatrapa', Great Satrap, was coined in the same way as 'Raja' and 'Maharaja'. In the Indo-Scythian administration there is reference not only to the joint rule of two kings, but also of two Kṣatrapas, as well as of a Mahākṣatrapa and a Kṣatrapa. Some of the Satraps who may have been military governors were styled Stratega (Greek Strategos; cf. the other satrapal title Meridarkha, Greek Meridarch).[1]

According to Rapson, "the word is itself a Sanskritised form of the old Persian 'Khshathrapāvan'.. "Protector of the land". It appears first in Indian coin legends and inscriptions of the second century B.C. but has never been found in Sanskrit or Prakrit literature. It is essentially a borrowed word, used only to

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[1] A.I.H. p.132, 133.

denote the holder of an office which was of foreign origin. In India, as in Persia, the 'Ksatrapa' was originally, no doubt a viceroy of the 'King of Kings'; but together with this title there appears, in India one higher rank viz. that of 'Mahākṣatrapa' or 'great satrap'. The Mahākṣatrapa no doubt occupied a position of greater power and independence than the Ksatrapa, but he still seems to have acknowledged the suzerainty of a 'King of Kings'. To what extent his power was limited by this suzerainty cannot be exactly determined. It is, however, evident that after the various satrapal houses had become established in the rule of their respective provinces, it became customary to find a Mahākṣatrapa and a Ksatrap reigning together at the same time, the latter occupying the position of heir-apparent, and regularly, in due course, succeeding to the higher dignity".[1] It was perhaps a set pattern of Śaka Government that the heir-apparent, usually a son, was always associated in the administration during the life time of his father, to succeed him in due course.

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1. Rapson, Catalogue of Indian Coins, p.c.

With the scanty information at our disposal it is very difficult to determine the exact number of such satrapal families. Nevertheless, researches have brought to light the existence of two such families who appear to have played a prominent rôle in the history of the northern country. The earliest recorded ruler of this category was Laika Kusulaka, Satrap of Chukṣ~~h~~a,[1] who with his descendants constituted one of the known satrapal families. The other family was that of Rajubula, the Great Satrap of Mathura.

The House of Chukṣ~~h~~a

The name of this dynasty comes down to us in the Taxila copper plate inscription, of the year 78 or 51 B.C., of Patika son of Kṣatrapa Liaka Kusulaka, who subsequently appears to have succeeded his father.[2] Liaka Kusulaka struck his own coins with the inscription "ΛIAKO KOZOYΛO".[3]

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[1] Rapson, C.H.I., Vol.I, p.575.

[2] Rapson, Catalogue of Indian Coins, p.cii; C.H.I., Vol.I, p.575; Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.47; Dr. D.C.Sircar, A.I.U., p.133.

[3] Rapson, Cat.of Indian coins, p.cii.

In type, these coins were copies from those of Eucratides with "king's helmeted head: 'pilai' and palms of the Dioscuri".[1] That he was a contemporary of king Maues and acknowledged him as his over-lord, can be safely inferred from the Taxila copper plate inscription.

From the Taxila copper plate inscription of the year 78 (51 B.C.) we also learn that this family ruled over Chhahara and Chukṣ~~h~~a.[2] These districts cannot be exactly identified, but they were definitely in the neighbourhood of Taxila. Marshal is inclined to identify Chukṣ~~h~~a with Mordern Chach "a broad and alluvial plain in the north of Attock." He is of the opinion that this satrapy included Peshawar valley on the west of Indus and most of the Hazara, Attock and Mianwali districts in the east.[3] They seem to have been powerful chiefs whose main duty it was to guard the northern frontiers against any possible in-raid.[4]

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1. ibid. Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.47; Rapson C.H.I., Vol.I, p.575.
2. Rapson, C.H.I., Vol.I, p.575.
3. Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.48.
4. ibid., p.47.

Liaka Kusulaka was succeeded by Patika whose name, with the title of Mahākṣ~~h~~atrapa, appears on the Mathura Lion Capital inscription of the time of Mahākṣ~~h~~atrapa Rājubula.[1] The inscription mentions a Mahākṣ~~h~~atrapa "Kusulaa Padika" and a Kṣ~~h~~atrapa Mevaki Miyika (perhaps a successor of "Padika"). Dr. Sircar[2] thinks that Patika Kusuluka of the Mathura records is not the Mahākṣ~~h~~atrapa Patika, son of Liaka Kusulaka. But there appears no ground to support this view.

Coins of Patika Kusulaka are conspicuously missing.[3] Non-availability of his coins is a sufficient cause to suggest that his rule was short-lived, and perhaps he had to abandon his territories during the disturbances following the death of Maues already referred to in the foregoing pages. Perhaps because of this reason we do not learn anything about the immediate successors of Patika. We come across a number of coins of a satrap Zeionises or Jihunia, son of

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[1] Rapson, C.H.I., Vol. I, p.575-576.

[2] A.I.U., p.133.

[3] Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.47.

Manigula, who seems to have appeared on the scene at a later date. Perhaps he was a contemporary of Azes II[1], or the Parthian suzerain Gondophernes.[2] An inscription from Taxila also refers to a Kṣatrapa of Chukṣa named Jihonika (Zeionises) who was, perhaps, son of a Mahārāja whose name cannot be read. Dr. Sircar thinks that he was a grandson of Zeionises, son of Manigula.[3] He disagrees with Konow's suggestion that Jihonika was the son of a brother of Azes II, because he thinks that Konow's conclusion was based on a conjectural restoration of a defaced portion of the inscription.[4] Marshal[5], however, does not make any distinction between Zeionises of the coins and Zeionises of the Taxila inscription.

Satraps of Mathura

The satrapal family at Mathura was perhaps much more established as compared to other Śaka satraps. The earliest amongst the

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[1] Sircar, D.C., A.I.U., pp.133-134.

[2] Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.47.

[3] A.I.U., p.134.

[4] ibid.

[5] Taxila, Vol.I, p.55.

Kshastraps of Mathura seems to have been Rājubula[1] though De Leeuw is inclined to think that he was preceded by Hagāmaśa and Hagāna.[2]

Different scholars have given varying views about the date of Rājubula.[3] Originally Cunningham mistook him to be a certain Rājapāla, taken to be the last king of the Mayura dynasty of Delhi and asserted that Rājapāla was vanquished by 'Śakāditya'.[4] In 1890, he read the name written in full in Pali letters as "Rājubula" and took him to be "the independent ruler of North-west India" just before the conquest of Wima Kadphises early in the 1st century A.D. Marshal thinks that he was a contemporary of Azes I.[5]

Marshal supports the view of De Leeuw that "Mathura already had a line of Saka Satraps" before Rājubula though they may not have been anyway connected with the Northern satraps.[6] Marshal further holds that the earlier

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1. Sircar, *A.I.U.*, p.134.
2. *The Scythian Period*, p.336.
3. Fleet, *J.R.A.S.*, 1907, p.1024 et seq.
4. ibid., p.1029-1030.
5. *Taxila*, Vol. I, p.54.
6. ibid., p.55.

Śaka satraps namely Śivaghosha, Śivadatta, Hagāmāsha and Hagāna, might have come from Ujjain when they were uprooted by Vikramāditya, and that for their safety against the powerful and awe-inspiring Āndhras, might have put themselves under the protection of the powerful Satrap in the east Punjab and his still more powerful suzerain (Azes I).[1] It is also possible that in order to bring the important satrapy of Mathura under his direct control and thus to safeguard the eastern frontiers the Śaka suzerain might have raised Rājubula to the higher rank of Mahākshatrapa without lowering the status of the local Satraps.[2]

Rājubula issued a large number coins. His coins have been found over a wide area between the Indus and the Jamuna rivers,[3] thus indicating that he ruled over a large territory. His earlier coins are of debased silver with legends in corrupt Greek and Kharoshthi and are copied from the well known type of Strato I and his

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[1] ibid.
[2] ibid.
[3] ibid., p.54.

successors, viz. "Bust of king and Pallas hurling thunder-bolt."[1] His other coins are of lead or coated with lead and copper. In his later coins he is styled as Mahākṣatrapa.[2] The legends are in Brāhmī and the figure of "Lakṣmī facing between symbols"[3], suggests the growing Indianisation. Marshal thinks that the idea of using lead for coining might have been borrowed from the Āndhras who seem to have been using it as early as 60 B.C.[4]

From the find-spots of the coins of Rājuvula it can be inferred that he must have held practically the whole of the east Punjab as far east as Mathura.[5] The scattered coin-finds in Taxila led Marshal to believe that at least for some time Taxila also formed a part of his dominions.[6] Like his counter-part in the north-west he was also a powerful Governor, perhaps meant to guard the eastern frontiers which might have been constantly threatened by the ever growing Āndhras.[7]

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1. ibid.; Rapson, Cat. of Indian Coins, p.ciii.
2. Marshal, ibid.
3. ibid.
4. ibid, footnote.
5. Cunningham, Coins of Indo-Scythians, Part II, p.26.
6. Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.54.
7. ibid., p.55.

It would be natural to infer from the inscription on the Mathura Lion Capital that Rājubula and his family were intimately connected with the Śaka Satraps of Chukṣha. It has also been suggested that the queen of Rājubula who was responsible for the aforesaid inscription was related to the Śaka king Maues (subject to the identification of Muki of the inscription with Moga, Maues).[1]

Rājubula was succeeded by his son Śoḍāsa or Saudāsa. From the type of his coins and their find-spots it is inferred that he had nothing to do with Taxila and his reign was confined to the Jamuna valley and, in particular, to the Mathura district.[2]

__Kharaosta:__

From the coins having usual bilingual legends we know of a Satrap Kharaoṣṭa by name. The Kharosthi legend, as restored by Rapson, runs as follows :

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[1] De Leeuw, The Scythian Period, p.333 et.seq.

[2] Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.55; Cunningham, Coins of Indo-Scythians, etc., Part II, p.27.

Chhatrapasa pra Kharaostasa Artasa putrasa (of the Chhatrapa Kharaoṣṭa, son of Arta.)[1]

Dr. Fleet is of the opinion that this satrap was a grandson (daughter's son) of Rājubula and so a nephew of Śoḍāṣa.[2] Marshal, however, takes him to be a member of Chukṣ~~h~~a satrapy and thinks that he succeeded Patika Kusulaka.[3]

Kapiśā

A satrap of Kapiśā, otherwise unknown, is mentioned in the inscription on the Manikyala cylinder.[4] Perhaps the Śakas were responsible for the fall of the Greek kingdom of Kapiśā, and after establishing themselves turned the Greek kingdom into a satrapy under a Śaka Governor.

Mention may also be made of an officer with a Greek title 'Strategos'[5] who seems to have been an army officer. The term originated from the Greeks and came down to Śakas without

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1. Cited from Fleet, J.R.A.S., 1907, p.1029.
2. J.R.A.S., 1907, p.1028.
3. Taxila, Vol.I, p.55.
4. Rapson, Cat. of Indian coins, p.ci and cii; also Dawson, J.R.A.S. 1863, p.244, pl.IV,4.
5. Rapson, C.H.I. Vol.I. p. 577.

any change. However, we do not know much about these officers except one, Aspavarman by name, though they have been repeatedly mentioned in the Śaka inscriptions.[1] Aspavarman was a contemporary of Azes II, and as it appears, served the Parthian Gondophernes after the fall of Azes. He was succeeded by his nephew Śaśas who held the office of the Commander-in-chief under the Parthians sovereigns Gondophernes and his successor Pacores.[2]

(c) WESTERN SATRAPS

A detailed study of the Śakas of Ujjain, usually known as Western Satraps, do not form a part of this work. However, the treatise would not be deemed complete without a brief description of these rulers, who were very much responsible to fuse themselves and their Śaka followers into the Indian social order in such a way that they lost their foreign identity.

Śakas in Sindh: The earliest reference to these Scythians may be traced in the Periplus, where it has been mentioned that Minnanagar, the

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[1] ibid.

[2] ibid.

Metropolis of scythia, was being governed by Parthian princes who were constantly at strife among themselves.[1] Cunningham is of the opinion that these princes cannot be Parthians. He says that they were Indo-Scythian Śakas who were of the same race as the Parthians.[2] Since the date of the *Periplus* cannot be definitely established, it is difficult to assign an exact date and time of the entry of Śakas into the Indus Valley. However, from references to certain kings of Abyssinia, Cunningham is inclined to believe that it was written between 80-100 A.D.[3] On the other hand Dr. Sircar is of the view that the possible date of the work is 70-80 A.D.[4] Without entering into the controversy of the date of the *Periplus*, we may infer that the Śakas were governing Sindh between 70 and 100 A.D. This should not, however, be taken as the initial date of their entry in Sindh.

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1. Cunningham, *Coins of Indo Scythians*, etc., Part I, p.36.
2. ibid., p.37.
3. ibid., p.36.
4. *A.I.U.*, p.178.

The exact origin and the details about the way they entered Sindh is not available. It appears that they came directly from Sakastan through the Bolan pass and expelled the Indian ruling dynasties that they might have come across. Cunningham[1] tries to connect these Śakas with Maues and his successors; and with that end in view he quotes a passage from 'Majmal-ut-Tawarikh' which gives the names of four kings who are successive rulers of Sindh. They are as follows:

1. Ayand
2. Risal
3. Rowal
4. Barkamaris.

In addition to these a mention is also made of a rebel. The dynasty was founded by Kafand.[2]

Cunningham identifies these names like this :

1. Ayand may be Aya or Azes,
2. Risal may be Ayilisha or Azilises,

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[1] Coins of Indo-Scythians etc., Part I, pp.49-50.

[2] ibid.

The exact origin and the details about the way they entered Sindh is not available. It appears that they came directly from Sakastan through the Bolan pass and expelled the Indian ruling dynasties that they might have come across. Cunningham[1] tried to connect these Sakas with Azes and its successors; and with that end in view he quotes a passage from 'Majmal-ut-Tawarikh' which gives the names of four kings who were successive rulers of Sindh. They are as follows:

1. Ayand
2. Hasal
3. Rawal
4. Barkamaris.

In addition to these a mention is also made of a Rabal. The dynasty was founded by Kafand.[2]

Cunningham identifies these names like this:

1. Ayand may be Aya or Azes,
2. Hasal may be Spalirises or Azilises,

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1. Coins of Indo-Scythians etc., Part I, pp.25-26.
2. Ibid.

3. The rebel might be Jihunia or Zeionises, a Śaka satrap,
4. Rowal might be Spalirises,
5. Barkamaris might be the nameless king or perhaps 'Bikramadit',
6. The founder of the dynasty, Kafand, has been identified with Moga or Maues.[1]

The above identification does not appear to be scientific and is based more on imagination than on logic. We know that the Śaka kings of Punjab struck a vast variety of coins bearing their names in Greek and Kharoshthi. Had their reign extended to Sindh, at least some of their coins should have been found in Sindh also. But they are conspicuously absent from there. A number of inscriptions of the Northern Śakas discovered from various places are also silent about Sindh. Similarly the Mathura inscription, while mentioning other Śaka satraps, failed to mention anybody from Sindh. How can, then, these two different peoples be connected ? However, it goes without saying that Śakas appeared in Sindh

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[1] Ibid.

before they came to Saurashtra and Malwa.

Western Satraps

From a Jain source, Kālakāchārya-Kathānaka, already mentioned, we learn that some adventurous Śaka chiefs of Sindh went to Saurashtra and advanced up to Avantideśa (Malwa), defeated Raja Gardabhilla and took possession of Ujjain, though they were driven out only four years later.[1] After some time, however, we again find these satraps or 'śāhīs' ruling in Saurashtra and Malwa.

These Kṣatrapas of western India are generally termed as 'Śāhī' which term includes at least two distinct families, the Kṣaharatas and the family of Chaṣṭana.[2] Both the families seem to be of a foreign descent, though the names of some of them appear to be Hinduised.[3] Following Thomas,[4] Cunningham thinks that Kṣaharatas may have been Pahlavas whereas the family of Chaṣṭana were Śakas.[5] Whatever the case might have been, at

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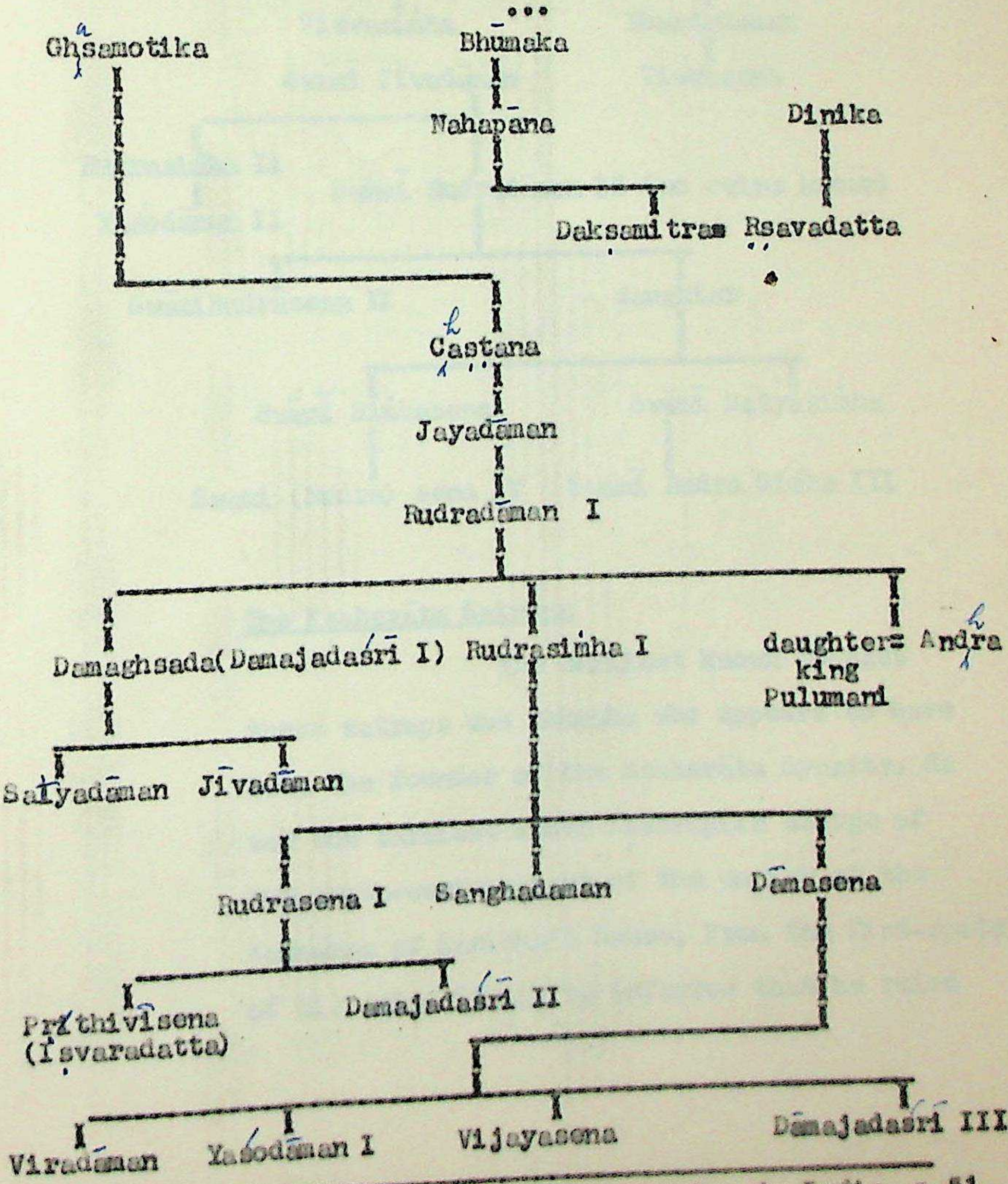
1. ibid., pp.34-35.
2. ibid., p.ciii.
3. ibid., pp.ciii and civ,
4. J.R.A.S., 1906, p.211; Cunningham, Coins of Indo-Scythians, etc., p.civ, foot-note.
5. ibid., pp.civ, cv.

a later stage all of them were known as Śakas.

The following table gives the chronological details of the Western Satraps:

WESTERN KSATRAPS[1]


...
Ghasamotika
Bhūmaka
Nahapāna
Dinika
Dakṣamitram
Ṛṣavadatta
Cashtana
Jayadāman
Rudradāman I
Damaghsada(Dāmajadaśrī I)
Rudrasimha I
daughter= Andhra king Pulumavi
Satyadāman
Jīvadāman
Rudrasena I
Sanghadaman
Dāmasena
Pṛthivīsena (Īśvaradatta)
Damajadaśrī II
Vīradāman
Yaśodāman I
Vijayasena
Dāmajadaśrī III

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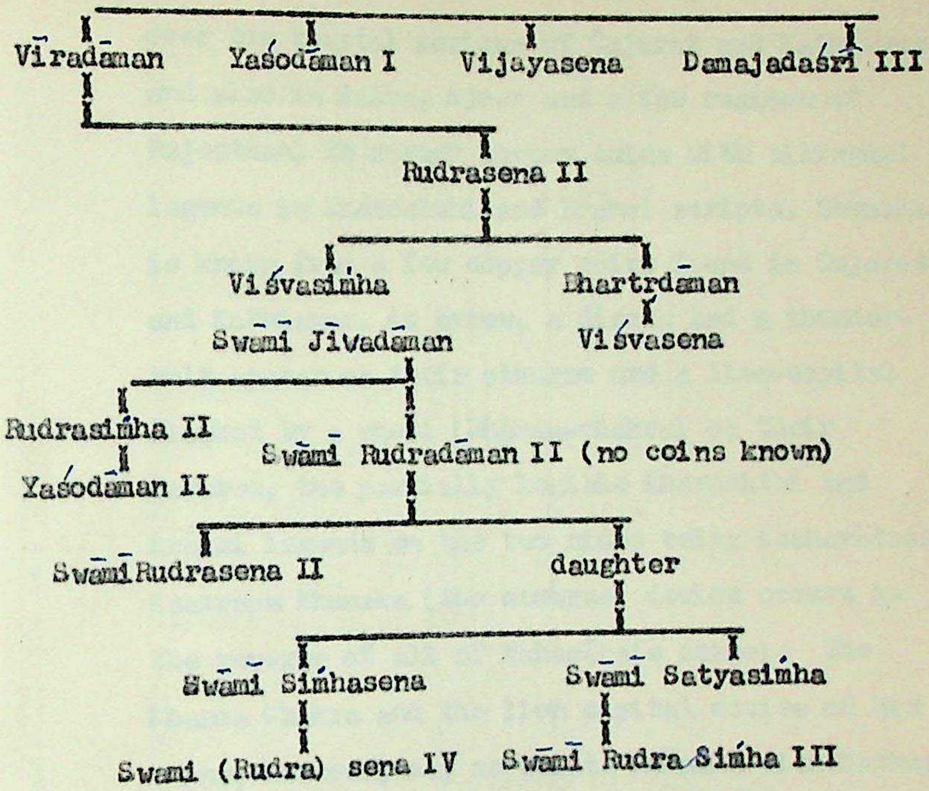
1. Chattopadhyaya, Dr.S., Sakas in India, p.51.

(CONTD)


Vīradāman
Yaśodāman I
Vijayasena
Damajadaśrī III
Rudrasena II
Viśvasiṁha
Bhartṛdāman
Swāmī Jīvadāman
Viśvasena
Rudrasiṁha II
Swāmī Rudradāman II (no coins known)
Yaśodāman II
Swāmī Rudrasena II
daughter
Swāmī Siṁhasena
Swāmī Satyasiṁha
Swāmī (Rudra) sena IV
Swāmī Rudra Siṁha III

The Kṣaharāta Satraps

The earliest known amongst these satraps was Bhūmaka who appears to have been the founder of the Kṣaharāta dynasty. He was the earliest known Kṣatrapa in charge of the south-western part of the empire of the Kuśāṇas of Kaniṣka's house. From the find-spots of his coins it may be inferred that he ruled

over the coastal regions of Gujarat and Kathiawar and also in Malwa, Ajmer and a few regions of Rajasthan. He struck copper coins with bilingual legends in Kharoshthi and Brāhmī scripts. Bhūmaka is known from a few copper coins found in Gujarat and Kathiawar. An arrow, a discus and a thunderbolt appear on their obverse and a lion-capital flanked by a wheel (Dharma-chakra) on their reverse, the partially legible Kharoshthi and Brāhmī legends on the two sides being Kṣaharātasa Kṣatrapa Bhūmaka (the obverse, device occurs on the reverse of all of Nahapāṇa's coins). The Dharma Chakra and the lion capital devise of his coins, however, may associate Bhūmaka with Mathura, where the inscribed lion is an interesting mem~~o~~ento of the Śaka occupation of that region. Possibly Bhūmaka was entrusted by the Kushāṇa overlords to rule the westernmost conquests or may have been ruling the region before the Kushāṇas came, and so he called himself Kṣatrapa only.

Traces of Greek legend on the coins of the early Kṣatrapas of Western India point to the influence and popularity in Indo-Scythia of the Indo-Greek coinage to which the over the eastern portions of Gujarat and Kathiawar and also in Malwa, Ajmer and a few regions of Rajasthan. He struck copper coins with bilingual legends in Kharoshthi and Brahmi scripts. Bhumaka is known from a few copper coins found in Gujarat and Kathiawar. An arrow, a discus and a thunder-bolt appear on their obverse and a lion-capital flanked by a wheel (Dharma-chakra) on their reverse, the partially legible Kharoshthi and Brahmi legends on the two sides being Kshaharatasa Kshatrapasa Bhumakasa (the obverse, device occurs on the reverse of all of Nahapana's coins). The Dharma Chakra and the lion capital device of his coins, however, may connect the Bhumaka with Mathura, where the inverted lion is an interesting emblem of the Saka occupation of that region. Possibly Bhumaka was entrusted by the Kushana overlords to rule the [illegible] conquests or may have been ruling the region before the Kushanas came, and so he called himself Kshatrapa,only.

Traces of Greek legend on the coins of the early Kshatrapas of western India point to the influence and popularity in Indo-[illegible] of the Indo-Greek coinage to which the

Periplus bears witness. Some writers are inclined to associate the use of Kharoshthi on the earlier satrapal issues with the northern origin of the Kṣatrapas. No details of Bhūmaka's rule are known.

Nahapāṇa

Nahapāṇa appears to have succeeded Bhūmaka. Though of the same family, his relationship with his predecessor is not known. Rapson rightly holds that considerations of the type and fabric of his coins and of the nature of the coin legends leave no room for doubting that Bhūmaka preceded Nahapāṇa; but there is no evidence[1] to show the relationship between them. Originally he was taken to have ruled for a pretty long period, but now the established dates of his reign are the years 41-46, read to be 119-124 A.D.[2] How long he ruled after the year 46 is still an unsettled point, but Dr. Sircar takes him to be a contemporary of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇī. His earlier inscriptions call him only a Kṣatrapa whereas at a later stage he is styled as Mahākṣatrapa.

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[1] *History of India*, Vol.II, p.274.

[2] *A.I.U.*, p.180.

He issued both silver and copper coins. The coins bear Yavana or Graeco-Roman characteristics in them. On his coins he styles himself as 'Rājan' together with his family designation 'Kṣaharāta', and on none of them occurs the title Kṣatrapa or Mahākṣatrapa. No records of Nahapāṇa refers to his overlord, which suggests that he enjoyed practically an independent status, maintaining a nominal allegiance to the Kuṣhāṇas.

His coins which are abundant in number, are apparently imitated in size, weight and fabric, from the Yavana kings of early date, and set a standard which was followed by the Western Satraps for the coming two centuries, and even afterwards by their successors, the Guptas and the Traikūṭakas.[1]

Though a rough estimate of the extent of Nahapāṇa's dominions can be established from the find-spots of his coins, a partially correct information to this effect is provided by a number of inscriptions at Nasik and Karle, recording the pious gifts of a Hinduised chief Ṛṣabhadatta, who appears to have been the husband

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[1] Cunningham, ibid., p.cviii; Sircar, ibid.

of Dakṣamitrā, daughter of Nahapāna.[1] Ṛṣabhadatta was the governor of the southern provinces of his father-in-law's dominions and ruled over the districts of Govardhana (Nasik) and Mamala (Poona) in the south and southern Gujarat and the northern Konkan from Broach to Sopara.[2] The inscriptions of Ṛṣabhadatta refer to vast dominions, and Dr. Sircar[3] thinks that Malwa, Kathiawar, Gujarat, Northern parts of Konkan and a large part of Rajputana including a portion of lower Sindhu valley lay within the dominions of his father-in-law.

Shortly after the year 46 (A.D. 124-25) the Satrap seems to have been killed by Śātavāhana Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi who annexed the southern provinces of his dominions.

Nahapāṇa's death gave the signal for the extinction of the Kṣaharāta family, the broken strings of which were collected together by Chaṣṭana, who established a new line of independent or semi-independent Satraps who continued to wield power for a pretty long time.[4]

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1. Cunningham, ibid., p.cx; Sircar, ibid., p.181.
2. ibid.
3. A.I.U., p.181.
4. Sircar, ibid., p.182.

The origin of Chaṣṭana's family cannot be traced beyond the fact that his father's name is mentioned without any royal title, thus suggesting that the family had an humble origin. Every ruler of this family, as a rule, records the name of his father on the coins thus making it very easy to trace the whole line.[1]

Chaṣṭana ruled from 46-72 or 124-150 A.D. with Ujjain as his capital.[2] His son Jayadāman was associated in the administration with a title of Ksatrapa.[3] But it appears that Jayadāman died in his father's lifetime or soon afterwards, because we notice that Chastana was succeeded by his grandson Rudradāman I.[4]

Chaṣṭana struck a variety of coins. His silver coins, like those of Nahapāṇa, have legends in Greek characters on the obverse and in Brāhmī and Kharoshthi on the reverse.[5] The use of Kharoshthi, however, discontinued later on,

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[1] Cunningham, Coins of Indo-Scythians, p.cxi.

[2] ibid., pp.cxii & cxiii.

[3] ibid.; Sircar, A.I.U., p.183.

[4] Sircar, ibid., p.183.

[5] Cunningham, Coins of Indo-Scythian, etc, part I, p.cxiii.

perhaps due to the reason that Śakas were removed from the Kharoshthi comprehending areas.[1]

As noticed above, Chaṣṭana was succeeded by his grandson Rudradāman I. He appears to have been a constructive genius and inspite of his martial engagements, he was able to establish a fairly good system of administration. He claims to have defeated Śātakarṇī ruler twice, though the matrimonial alliance between the two houses forbade him to uproot the Śātakarṇis.[2] His other conquests include Malwa, Kathiawar, Gujarat, northern Konkan and Māhiṣmatī (modern Maheshvar) regions on Narmada, Kachcha, Svabhra (the Sabarmati valley), Maru or Marwar, a part of Sindhu valley and Niṣada.[3] He is also said to have inflicted a crushing defeat on the Yaudheyas of southern Punjab.[4]

The Junagarh inscription of his reign tells us about his public welfare activities. We learn from this inscription that

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1. Sircar, A.I.U., p.184.
2. ibid., pp.183-184.
3. ibid.
4. ibid., p.185.

he reconstructed the famous Sudarśana Lake originally constructed by Puskya Gupta, a viceroy of Chandra Gupta Maurya. The dam of the lake was washed away by strong streams of Suvarṇasikatā and Palāśinī, thus causing great alarm to the peasants. Rudradāman appreciated the need and managed to repair and reconstruct the dam.[1]

Rudradāman was a good administrator, and people under him enjoyed peace and prosperity. He claims that his dominions were free from disease, robbers, wild beasts and other pests.[2] Himself a past master of grammer, polity, music and logic, he was a great patron of classical Sanskrit. He could compose both in prose and verse in that language with excellance. The prose of his inscription is the chastest after that of the Brāhmaṇas. It is significant that such service to Sanskrit should have been rendered by a non Brahmin alien as against his enimical Brahmin Śātavāhana rulers who always caused their epigraphs incised in

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1. ibid., p.184.
2. ibid., p.185.

Prakrit. The city of Ujjain under him developed as a great seat of learning.[1]

There is sufficient evidence to believe that Śakas under Rudradāman were practically absorbed in the folds of Indian society. The Junagarh inscription tells us that Rudradāman attended a number of Śwayamvaras and won a number of princesses. Girls of the Kardamaka house were also given in marriage to the neighbouring rulers.

The Kardamakas continued to rule till about 295-96 A.D. when the last Mahākṣatrapa Bhartṛ~~i~~dāman and his son Viśvasena were overthrown by the Sassanians.[2]

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1. ibid.
2. ibid., p.190.

CHAPTER IV

The Remnants of the Śakas

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The record of the victorious exploits of Samudragupta on the Asokan pillar, now in the fort of Allahabad, envisages the Gupta emperor having overawed the frontier tribes living beyond the Indus, presumably on the Hindukush around Kabul. These have been mentioned under the composite expression of Daivaputra-Śāhi-Śāhānuśāhi Śaka-Murundaih. The expression obviously refers to several ethnic units of foreign extraction who had become supreme in and ruled over numerous principalities of the north and the north-west of India.[1] Of these the first, Daivaputras were positively the Kushāṇas, who had borrowed for their kings the epithet of the Chinese emperors 'Son of Heaven', and called themselves Daivaputras. Śāhi-Śāhānuśāhis were perhaps the "Lords and the Overlords" among

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[1] Majumdar, Dr.R.C., 'The History and Culture of the Indian people', Vol.III, *The Classical Age*, p.10. He is inclined to suggest that Daivaputra Śāhi Śāhānuśāhi were Kushāṇa kings of western Punjab and Afghanistan.

the Śakas, who formally, and at least in the beginning, accepted the suzerainty of the Iranian emperors and designated themselves as their provincial Governors or Kṣatrapas (Satraps). Śāhi and Śāhānuśāhi are Persian titles of Iranian kings and emperors. Śāh means a 'king' and Śāhānśāha a 'king of kings' in Persian, and the latter is almost a translation into later Persian from the old Persian into which Darius I acclaims himself "Kshayathiya, Kshayathiya Kshayathiyanam". The first two words Daivaputra and Śāhi may also be treated as one compound meaning the "King, Son of Heaven" and would then together refer exclusively to the rump and remnant of the erstwhile Kuṣhāṇa rulers. In that case Śāhi-Śāhānuśāhi would mean the emperor or king of kings, indeed the Śaka-overlords, or the entire phrase Daivaputra-Śāhi-Śāhānuśāhi could have been used in the sense of adjectives qualifying Śaka-Murundaiḥ, i.e. by the Śaka lords. The Kuṣhāṇas have not been mentioned by name but since their epithet Daivaputra has been used in the context a reference to them in the expression is implicit

beyond doubt. The entire expression might even be interpreted as having been used by a conqueror and superior power contemptuously and satirically indicating the progeny of once sovereign suzerains the Kuṣāṇas and the Śakas. Though the passage describing the relationship of the frontier tribes with Samudragupta "is somewhat vague and uncertain but it may be taken for granted that they sought to win the favour of the great emperor by personal attendance in his court, offering daughters in marriage, and asking permission for the use of imperial coins or soliciting imperial charters confirming them in the enjoyment of their territories. This attitude of subservience"[1] and submission could be either as a result of a military defeat or a diplomatic move undertaken by an overawed principality to keep a powerful empire in good humour, so that it is saved from a possible catastrophe of extinction like so many others. Now what pre-eminently stands out in this context is the positive reference to both the

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[1] The History and Culture of the Indian people Vol.III (The Classical Age), pp.10-11.

Kuṣāṇas and the Śakas having fallen to narrow straits of whom the Śāhis, evidently the Śakas, came to play a great rôle in later centuries when as Śāhiyas, of whom two distinguished kings were Jayapāla and Ānandapāla (Anangapāla), they sought to resist the depredations and invasions of the Turks. How this came to happen we shall deal in due context.

The Śāhis in course of time were accepted as Kṣatriyas without taking recourse even to traditions like the fire-pit of Abu needed to sanctify the appearance of the four illustrious Rajput families. The Śāhiyas did not only change from the Śaka to the Kṣatriya fold but some of them were even transformed from the Kṣatriya caste into the Brāhmin. Al-Beruni in his celebrated work "Tahkiqat-i-Hind" counts two classes of Śāhiya rulers, the Turk and the Hindu.[1] The Turk Śāhis were presumably the descendants of the Kuṣāṇas as the latter were known generically to be Turks for they are even today so designed and called

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[1] The Hindi version of Sachau's translation of Alberuni, p.300 onwards.

the first Turks of India by scholars of modern Turkey and mentioned so in the recent publications of the Turkish Encyclopaedia, edited by the late Prof. Togan of the University of Ankara. Al-Beruni[1] counts as many as 60 Turk Śāhīs. His enumeration of the Hindu Śāhīs may not be correct on every count but in its generality it has to be accepted as a positive piece of history since he was writing about his own contemporaneous time or about incidents only a few centuries anterior to himself. The rise of the Śāhiyas or this Rajput-cum-Brahmin royal dynasty ruling around Kabul is a revolutionary phenemenon in the social and cultural history of India, proving as to how a class of foreigners was not only acclimatised as local patriots but as the protectors of the faith and the leaders of the Hindus marking events from the watch tower of the Hindukush. Of this metamorphosis we shall deal later. It should suffice here to tell that the so-called foreigners, namely the Śakas and the Kushāṇas, supposed to have been crowded out by the Guptas, were indeed absorbed in the bulwark the first Rulers of India by scholars of modern history and mentioned as in the recent publications of the Turkish Encyclopaedia, edited by the late Prof. Togan of the University of Ankara. Al-Beruni[1] counts as many as 60 Turk Shahis. His enumeration of the Shahi kings may not be correct on every count but in its generality it has to be accepted as a positive piece of history since he was writing about his own contemporaries or about incidents only a few centuries anterior to himself. The rise of the Shahiyas or this Rajput-cum-Brahmin royal dynasty ruling around Kabul is a revolutionary phenomenon in the social and cultural history of India, proving as to how a class of foreigners was not only acclimatised as local potentates but as the protectors of the faith and the leaders of the Hindus seeking shelter from the onslaught of the Hindukush. Of this phenomenon we shall deal later. It should suffice here to tell that the so-called foreigners, namely the Hunas and the Scythians, supposed to have been crushed out by the Guptas, were indeed absorbed in the masses of the Hindu community which they sought to guard with their blood.

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[1] ibid.

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[1] Ibid.

The enumeration by Al-Beruni of the Śāhīs and his break up of them in the Turk and the Hindu Śāhīs may now be referred to succinctly here in order to deal specifically with the remnants of the Śakas. The Turk Śāhīs according to Al-Beruni, ruled for several years over the Kabul valley and the last king of the line, beginning with Barhatgin,[1] was Laghturman.[2] Presumably this line is of the Kuṣāṇa Śāhīs who indeed were Turks. During the rule of the last Turk Śāhī, Laghturman, there seems to have been a coup d'etat in which the Brahmin minister of Laghturman, Kallam by name, wrested power from him and established a new Brahmin dynasty of the Śhāhiyas, This coup was as much a revolution in politics of the north west frontier as in the social order, because it envisages a change in the order and status of communities first from the Śakas to Kṣatriyas and then from

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[1] ibid., p.300

[2] ibid., p.302

Kṣatriyas to Brahmins. I propose to suggest here that the Kuṣana line of the Śahīs ended with the last king i.e., Laghturman whom Al-Beruni calls the Turk Śāhī, and the new line beginning with Kallara, the Brahmin, was of the Śakas who had not only completely taken to the Brahmnic faith but had also taken Indian names retaining for themselves the family name Śāhiya formed from the base of their original epithet Śāhī Śāhānuśāhī.

The new line of the Hindu Śāhīs, called Śahiya in Indian records, which began with Kallara the minister, comprised of several kings among them being Jayapāla, Ānandapāla, Trilochanapāla and Bhīmapāla. In the list of Al-Beruni one Samanda (Samanta) and another Kamalu are inserted. Kalhaṇa's Rajataraṅgiṇī[1] mentions Lalliya instead of Kallara. Numerous coins struck by the Śāhiya kings have been found in the Kabul valley and the Punjab, where, in the latter place, until quite recently some of them have been current in the bazars. For two

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[1] v. 155.cf. notes of Sir R.L.Stein,Vol.II, p.336, and Vol.I, p.99; cf. Alberuni, ibid., p.302.

Ksatriyas to Brahmanism. I propose to suggest here that the Kusana line of the Sahis ended with the last king i.e., Lagaturman whom Al-Beruni calls the last Sahi, and the new line beginning with Kallara, the Brahmin, one of the Ranas who had not only completely taken to the Brahmanic faith but had also taken Indian names retaining for themselves the family name Sahiya formed from the base of their original epithet Sahi Sahanusahi.

The new line of the Hindu Sahis, called Sahiya in Indian records, which began with Kallara the minister, comprised of several kings among them being Jayapala, Anandapala, Trilochanapala and Bhimapala. In the list of Al-Beruni one example (Samanta) and another Kamalu are inverted. Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*[1] mentions Lalliya instead of Kallara. Numerous coins struck by the Sahiya kings have been found in the Kabul valley and the Panjab, which, in the latter place, would quite naturally some of them have been current in the bazars. [illegible] had centuries, between the 7th and the 9th, the Śāhiyas fought gallantly against the Arab generals and finally were thrown down from their heights of the Hindukush when the Turks made their appearance and dislodged them from there. The brunt of the Turk onslaught had to be borne by Śāhiya Jayapāla[1] when Subuktigin made a determined move towards the Khyber Pass during the last phase of the centuries. Mahmood, the son of Subuktigin, succeeded his father on the throne of Ghazni and he embarked on a planned invasion of India. He made several inroads between 1000 and 1026 A.D.[2] The first of these and next few were launched against Jayapāla who with his army, composed of several contingents from the kings of Kanauj, Kalinjar, Delhi and Ajmer, was so thoroughly routed that he, considering death more honourable than dishonour, entered fire[3] and thus ended the stigma of his defeat. Already the seat of the Śāhiya government had been shifted from Kabul to Bhatinda.

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[1] v. 155-56. notes of Stein, Rajatarangini, Vol.II, p.336, and Vol.I, p.[illegible]; cf. Alberuni's India, p.[illegible].

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[1] Alberuni, ibid., p.303; S.Lane-poole, *Mediaeval India*, p.11.

[2] *Mediaeval India*, p.12, footnote.

[3] ibid., p.13.

The next phase of the Śāhiya resistance against Mahmood fell during the rule of Ānandapāla who had succeeded his father. Mahmood made for the plains from the spurs of the Hindukush and Ānandapāla tried to save Peshawar in a bid for shere chivalry and while his Gakkhars, descendants of the Śakas, bare-headed and bare-footed, charged and broke asunder the line of the Turk horsemen on the flanks, one of those events, independent of chivalry, happened which turned the tables and the fate of the battle. The fateful arrow that struck an eye of the elephant of Ānandapāla made the beast wheel round and flee the field, an incident which turned the Hindu victory in a stampede and the Hindu forces led by diverse families of Rajputs retreated helter skelter, the field littered with men slaughtered and put to carnage.[1] Ānandapāla could not be rescued and the Śāhiya resistance broke down although the line of its rulers continued to fight the Turks for a few

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[1] ibid., pp.13-14.

reigns more. Trilochanapāla, the son of Ānandapāla, and his son Bhimapāla lost their lives fighting respectively in 1021 and 1026[1] and the glorious line of the Śahiyas, the last ruling remnants of the Śakas, came to an end.

The Rajtrangiṇī[2] speaks of the contribution of Kashmir to the rally of the kings invited to form into a confederation by Trilochanapāla to resist the Turk invader. Tuṅga, the lover of queen Diddā of Kashmir, shared the common defeat. Diddā herself had been the daughter's daughter of Bhima Sahi.[3]

The patriotic rôle of the Śahiyas proves their love for the land. This line of remnants of the Śakas by their austere soldierly existence on the frontier of India cancels the orthodox references to the Śakas being considered alien and devoid of castes. The Kushāṇa and Śaka Śahiyas were two ethnic units which ever since entering India made this land of adoption their own and accepted the faith

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1. ibid.; also cf. Alberuni, ibid., p.303.
2. VII, 47-71.
3. Rājtrangiṇī, VI., 178., also VII, 1081.

and persuation of this country, their chosen culture.

While closing their description it will not be out of place here to refer in passing to another branch of the Śakas, a fierce Scythian tribe the Gakkhars,[1] to whom an allusion has already been made. The Gakkhars, spread out in settlements over Sindh, the eastern and western Punjab, and across the Jhelum and Indus right upto the Khyber Pass in North West Frontier Province, had descended from the Śakas and had so completely identified themselves with India and her politics that all which militated against the land agitated and prompted them to action. Their bare-headed and bare-footed state proves their austere way of living but registers the throwing of their lot in favour of India whenever an occasion demanded it. It was they who fought and scattered the cavalry of Mahmood,[2] it was they who cut the

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[1] Lane-poole, ibid., p.13; for a fuller account of the Gakkhars see Elliot and Dowson, Vol.I, Rashiduddin's account of Alberuni.

[2] ibid., p.13.

head of Niyaltagin,[1] the defiler and raider of the temples of Banaras and the Governor of Lahore, and presented it to Masood, the son and successor of Mahmood of Ghazni,[2] and it was they again who quartered Shihabuddin Ghori when he was returning from the plains of India.[3] It is difficult at present to guess the proportion of blood flowing now in the veins of the Jats transmitted by the Gakkhars, one time the descendants of the Śaka patriots of India.

The Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta, which records his conquests does not refer to the principalities of the Śakas held independently by them as conquered but the fact that Chandragupta II had to wrest Malwa, Gujarat and Saurashtra from them shows that the Śakas had not been completely ousted from India by Samudragupta although quite a few tribes of them along with the remnants of the Kusanas had found shelter on the heights

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[1] ibid., p.30; also Cf. Elliot and Dowson, *History of India as told by its own Historians.*

[2] Lane-poole, ibid.

[3] ibid., p.39. Gakkhars rose in rebelion in the North West of India against the British as late as 1857.

of the Hindukush which indeed may have been the result of the exploits of the Bhāraśiva Nāgas. In fact, if the Rāmagupta episode has to be credited, which in the face of Viśākhadatta, Bāṇabhaṭṭa, Rāmachandra Guṇachandra, Śankarārya, Amoghavarṣa and Majmulat-i-Tawarikh cannot be discredited, the Śakas seem to have been only overawed by the prowess of Samudragupta and eclipsed merely temporarily, for immediately after Samudragupta they are said to have so demoralized Rāmagupta, Samudragupta's eldest son, that as a condition of the ignominous treaty he entered into with the Śaka chief he accepted to surrender his queen Dhruvadevī to the inveterate enemy.[1] It lay with his younger brother Chandragupta II (Vikramāditya) not only to uproot the Śakas from western India[2] but also to defeat a confedracy of enemies in Bengal of which one of the confederates[3] must have been the

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1. Upadhyaya, Dr. B.S., Prāchīna Bhārat kā Itihāsa, pp. 243-44.
2. ibid., pp.247-248.
3. शत्रून्समेत्यागतान्वङ्गेषु C.I.I., III, No.32, p.141, Verse 1.; (ibid, f.n.1, p.246).

resurrecting Śakas, who following up his victories in the east, according to the Mehrauli pillar, had now marched to the north west and having crossed the seven streams of the Punjab or the seven mouths of the Indus, are said to have alighted on the Vāhlīkas and trounced them.[1]

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[1] तीर्त्वा सप्तमुखानि येन समरे सिन्धोर्जिता वाह्लिका ibid.

CHAPTER V

Political Legacy Inherited by the Śakas

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The various aspects of the cultural life of the Śakas have to be studied under several headings. Before coming to India, in Iran and Scythia they had lived the local and Central Asian life, both gruesome and voilent, a life that endured for millenniums. Our discussion will distinguish the life of the Śakas in India from that in countries where they had lived before entering India. In India they were the inheritors of the glories of the Greeks in several aspects of cultural life which they enriched by incorporating the local and abandoning their own heritage. Their two lives, without and within this country, were very different from each other and it will be our endeavour to bring to light the sharp contrasts between them. But before we begin this aspect of study it may be more advantageous to treat their life coherently and chronologically following their immediate predecessors the Greeks. Much of their politics they imbibed

from the Greek rulers who had ruled over the Punjab, the north western frontier of India and the valley of the Kabul river. Besides the midland, Sindh, and western India, the Śakas were the inheritors of the dominions of the Indo-Greeks, whom, to a greater extent they had ousted from India, as earlier, from the valley of the Oxus. In the following pages therefore, we shall first deal as to how the power and authority passed ~~on~~ from the Greeks to the Śakas in the Punjab and upwards to Kabul.

"About the middle of third Century B.C. ~~Parthia~~ Bactria, which was considered a rich and important outpost of Hellenism in the east, revolted and broke away from the Seleucid Empire. Gradually the Seleucid monarch recognised the independance of Bactria, and as a mark of friendship gave the hand of his daughter to Demetrios,"[1] son of Euthydemos.

The newly established Greek Kingdom of Bactria grew in power and under

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[1] Tripathi, Rama Shankar, *History of Ancient India*, pp.201-202.

Demetrios expanded its boundaries towards east; its existence was felt as far as Saketa (Ayodhyā) and Madhyamikā (Nigarī, Chitor) in India.[1]

While Demetrios was busy in his exploits in the east, Eucratides, who was a general and first cousin of Antiochos IV,[2] successfully revolted in Bactria, leaving Demetrios confined to his newly acquired Indian dominion. Thus there arose two separate Greek principalities in the East, ruled by the rival houses of Euthydemos and Eucratides. The former held eastern Punjab with its capital at Euthydemia or Śākala (Sialkot), and Sindh and adjoining regions, and the latter was in possession of Bactria, Kabul valley, Gandhāra, and western Punjab.[3] The history of the Greek rule in these regions is characterised by internecine fighting among of the various princes of these two houses.[4]

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1. Tarn, G.B.I., pp.195-97.
2. Tripathi, Rama Shankar, History of Ancient India, pp.204-205.
3. ibid., p.207.
4. Sircar, D.C., A.I.U., p.111.

Thus, when the Śakas, following a tribal unrest in their original home beyond the Jaxartes, in Central Asia, were obliged to move in search of a new home, found an easy target in the already near exhausted Greek kingdom of Bactria.[1] Analysing the available contemporary information, Dr. Sircar[2] has expressed that early Śaka hordes could capture only a part of the Bactrian kingdom, other parts went to the control of the Parthian empire, which, to an extent enjoyed suzerainty over the early Śakas. The victory of the Śakas over their Bactrian territories was, however, shortlived, as towards the middle of the second century B.C. they were overthrown and driven out by the Yueh-Chi.[3]

Driven out from their newly acquired lands in Bactria the Śakas had to face the remnants of the Greeks in Bactria apart from the evergrowing Parthian Empire, which had extended up to the lower Sindhu during the reign of

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1. Sircar, D.C., A.I.U., pp.110-111.
2. ibid., p.111.
3. ibid.

Mithradates I about the middle of the second century B.C.[1] It appears that the Parthian rulers had to struggle hard before they could subdue the Śakas. As already pointed out, some of the Śaka chiefs appear to have accepted the suzerainty of the Parthians[2] but a few still continued their pursuit for a homeland and thus knocking about, they entered India.

As indicated above, most of north India was being ruled by the Greeks of the house of Euthydemos, and it is therefore apparent that it could not have been an easy task to dislodge the Greeks and establish a new kingdom in the Punjab even though remnants of the Greeks in Punjab were no longer a force once they used to be. It seems that the Śakas avoided an immediate confrontation with the Greeks in the Punjab and their intial kingdom lay between the remnants of the two Yavana houses in the upper Kabul valley and the eastern Punjab.[3]

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[1] ibid., p.118.

[2] ibid., p.121.

[3] Tripathi, Rama Sankar, *History of Ancient India*, p.213.

A great variety of coins issued by Maues have been discovered during excavations at Taxila. These coins are copied from those issued by princes of both the Indo-Greek houses, the Eucratidians ruling in the upper Kabul valley and the Euthydemians in the eastern Punjab.[1] On the basis of marks and moneyers' monograms on these coins, Dr. Marshal[2] is inclined to group them into three catagories and is of the view that these three catagories were minted in three different mints, namely Taxila, Kapiśī and Arachosia.[3] This is indicative of the fact that after establishing himself over the territory between the two Greek houses, Maues consolidated his gains and expanded his dominions during his own lifetime towards the east as well as the west. The occupation of Gandhāra by Maues, as suggested by the Taxila inscription of the year 78 of the Scytho-Parthian era, shows that by his conquests Maues drove a wedge between the two Indo-Greek kingdoms.[4] Although

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1. Sircar, A.I.U., p.126.
2. Taxila, Vol.II, p.778.
3. ibid., pp.778-779.
4. Sircar, A.I.U., p.126.

the extirpation of the Indo-Greek kingdoms of the eastern Punjab seems to have been left for his successor, the Śakas extended their power during Maues' rule, as far as Mathura in the east.[1] A very noteworthy Azes' coin type is 'Athene Promachos' on the reverse, which was characteristic of the coins of Menander and his successors in the eastern Punjab. It has therefore been supposed by numismatists that Azes not only ruled over the empire of Maues but he also extirpated the independent rule of the Euthydemian house in Punjab.[2]

On the basis of the accounts given by contemporary, or near contemporary Greek and Chinese writers, a different view has been advanced by Dr. Narayan, who arrives at the conclusion that the Sai of the Chinese annals, the Scytho-Parthians (i.e. the Scythians who had settled in Sacastene or Sakastan and who intermixed with the Parthians), and the Yueh-Chi (Tochari), were the three peoples who overthrew the Indo-Greeks, attacking them from different regions, and

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1. ibid., p.126.
2. ibid.

at different times. He considers them Śakas, Pahlavas and the Tuṣāra-Kuṣāṇas of the Indian sources respectively.[1]

Basing his arguement on the references to these three elements in the contemporary Chinese writings Dr. Narayan has concluded that Bactria proper, south of the Oxus, must have come under the complete political subjugation of the Yueh-chi sometimes about 100 B.C.[2], and that the Scythian tribes of the Jaxartes-Oxus area, who were being pressed by the Yueh-chi, occupied parts of Bactria after the death of Heliocles I, during the reign of Phraates II and Artabanus II from 135 to 124 B.C.[3] The rule of the successors of Heliocles I at this stage is more or less confined to Badakshan.[4] However, these Scythian tribes had to struggle hard till about 88 B.C., which is the year of the death of Mithridates II, after which the Scytho-Parthian tribes may have carved out for themselves an independent kingdom.[5]

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1. The Indo-Greeks, p.138.
2. ibid., p.140.
3. ibid., p.141.
4. ibid.
5. ibid.

Dr. Narayan is of the view that Maues and his followers, who appeared in the Punjab, were an independent branch of the Śakas[1] and they had nothing to do with the Scytho-Parthians who appeared in Bactria and later in Sakastan. According to him Maues appeared in the Punjab sometimes around 100 B.C., when both the Greek houses of the Punjab and Bactria were engaged in a strife, and when Apollodotus was able to overthrow Antialcidas in Taxila.[2] He says that "This historical coincidence is quite suggestive. It seems that Apollodotus was pre-occupied with the dynastic struggles of the Indo-Greeks in the Gandhara, Kabul, and Gazni regions, and by the time the climax of his success was reached in the overthrow of Antialcidas, his hold on the Swat and Hazara countries must have slackened to give way to the adventurous Śaka king Maues. But the existence of a copper coin of Apollodotus on a coin of Maues (in the

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[1] ibid., pp.137-138.

[2] ibid., pp.126, 145.

Collection of Mr. H.de S. Short.) suggests that the former was able to recover at least a part of his kingdom lost to the latter; this recovery must have been of a very brief duration, for obviously Maues soon occupied Taxila. That the reign of Apollodotus and Maues overlapped and mints changed hands from one to another is not only clear from this overstrike, but is supported by the fact that Maues frequently used .... monograms ..... in common with Apollodotus, and the square copper money of Maues bearing the 'Apollotripod' device could easily be mistaken for the coins of Apollodotus of the same type, but for the difference in legend. (PMC, Pl.X.18; BMC, Pl.XVII.7.) Moreover, the only square silver issue of the Śakas and the Pahlavas in India is that struck by Maues, (NC, 1890, Pl.V.3) which indicates that he was not far removed in time from Apollodotus[1] and Philoxenus, the king of the preceding generation, who were the only Indo-Greeks to strike square

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[1] ibid., p. 145.

silver money; and this square money has been noticed in the Swat Valley.[1]"

Whatever may have been the pattern or the procedure or the time, but this much is clear from the foregoing account that the Greek rule and authority gradually disappeared from Bactria, north western India and Afghanistan under the growing pressure of the Parthian Empire and the Śakas. The Śakas, not only succeeded them in the political power, but inherited the Greek political system, coinage and currency, social and cultural order, and after consolidating their gains, were to a very great extent responsible in developing these ideas and passing them on to the posterity in a shape that it was possible to develop them further to maturity. In the following pages we shall examine, as best as can be, how much, of the Greek legacy inherited by the Śakas was passed on to the Indian society at large. We can safely say that it was the Greeks who introduced various ideas and knowledge, but it was the Śakas who stabilised and propagated them,

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[1] ibid.

even at a stage when the Guptas were expanding their domains and were threatening the very existence of the Śakas.

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CHAPTER VI

Cultural Life

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Social Life

Recent excavations in the Altai region of the U.S.S.R. have brought to light certain hitherto unknown facts of the early Śaka civilization dating back to 6th or 5th century B.C.[1] These finds help us to know that Śakas were not totally barbarian or wholly nomadic tribes, as the early Greek and other contemporary writers would make us believe. They had a mature civilization and an established social order,[2] which got enriched by contacts with various civilizations during their long trek to India. The Greek reference to them as barbarians is an incident of ethnic superiority. The Greeks called all the non-Greeks Helots meaning thereby an inferior race, as did the Romans all non-Romans barbarions, or the Jews all non-Jews Gentiles and the Aryans all non-Aryans

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1. Rahul Sankrityayan, Madhya Asia kā Itihāsa, Part I, p.77.
2. ibid., p.78.

Anāryas or Mlechchhas. Śakas were nomadic only in a limited sense. They certainly were not settled in the manner the Sumerians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians and the Persians were settled but they had their settlements which endured for centuries in one place or riparian basin.

Before the Śakas appeared on the horizon of Indian history, they occupied large tracts of land in Central Asia, Russian steppes and the Danubian belts. There were several branches of the Śakas[1] and because of the similarity in their ways of life and social behaviour, the Greek and Chinese writers found it hard to distinguish one from the other. Indeed they got so much confused in their understanding that they either took them for different peoples, giving them different names, or called them by the common epithet of the Scythian. As a corollary to the mistaken identity of the Śakas, these writers believed that they were nomads. However, the finds at Altai, which now form parts of the exhibits in the Hermitage Museum of Leningrad[2]

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[1] ibid., pp. 73-74.
[2] ibid., p.77.

have set at rest the idea of their being nomads. They have evidenced the fact of an established civilization, in which articles of leather, cotton and silk and woollen fabrics and endless other articles of luxury were being put in use.

The finds at Altai include, apart from articles of leather, cotton and woollen fabrics, dead bodies of a male and a female. Both the bodies were in tact and well preserved, perhaps because of the layer of perpetual snow which formed natural protection against dissolution and dispensed with the need of embalming in the Egyptian manner. The bodies are universally accepted as belonging to a Śaka soldier and his wife. The soldier is of dark complexion and his cheek bones are prominently formed. The woman is fair and has a round face. The chest and shoulders of the man are tatooed with various figures of a complicated type,[1] done perhaps to ward off evil spirits. Other finds include woollen carpets of different textures and designs, the patterns rioting in colours.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 76-77.

The texture and designs on these carpets have helped areheologists to fix their date to the 6th or 5th century B.C.

The remains also include Chinese cloth, a looking glass and several small items of daily use. Further excavations of the graves led to the discovery of the bodies of 14 horses, bur~~r~~ied along with their masters. The horses appear to have been killed with poison and then bur~~r~~ied along with their dressings.

May be the observations of the Greek and Chinese writers refer to a much anterior period of the Śaka civilization so as to warrant an~~d~~ undeveloped mode of living.[1] Their main food was meat of animals and the main drink was milk. They perhaps quaffed fresh blood, in the manner of the Mahābhārata hero Bhima, of the fallen enemies.[2] They use to preserve the skull of the enemy leader as a trophy of war.[3]

The institution of marriage was in an elementary stage, polyandry being in vogue.

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[1] ibid., p.67.

[2] ibid., p.68.

[3] ibid.

Many brothers would have a common wife, and a group of men could be husband to a group of women.[1]

The last journey of the dead leader was attended with a grandeur unknown among other peoples. All his belongings, his arms, ornaments, clothings, horses, etc., were buried with him, his wife and servants not excepted.[2] This manner of burial was as much favoured by the Sumerians of Ur as by the Kashmiris of a very late age. Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇī applauds not only the wives mounting the funeral pyre of the husband but also compliments servants and maids entering fire with the corpse of their master.[3]

The dead bodies, particularly of the rulers, were buried after they were hung over a tree so that the flesh was used up by vultures.[4] There is evidence to show that sometimes the flesh was removed manually from the bones and

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1. ibid.
2. ibid.
3. V.227; VII. 1479, 1488, 1490-94.
4. Rahula, Madhya Asia kā Itihāsa , part I, p.68.

was thrown to vultures so that the bones were made available for immediate bur~~r~~ial.[1] Along with the system of bur~~r~~ial, that of cremation of the dead was also prevalent in which the wife also was expected to burn herself.[2] The system of Satī, common among the Rajputs for long, and earlier among the Aryans, was in a way reintroduced in India by the Śakas.[3]

Their dress throughout Eurasia was identical, and consisted of a pointed cap or helmet, a pair of pyjamas and a long coat or frock and a high-boot of leather or felt[4] reaching up to the knees. The Pyjama and the long coat were positively the same as appear on the statues of the Śaka soldiers[5] and Kushāṇa emperors.[6] Much later they served as models for the national dress of India in its items of the achkan and pyjama.

According to Chinese writers, the Śakas had pointed nose and golden hair.

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[1] ibid.

[2] ibid.

[3] ibid.

[4] ibid.

[5] Ph. Vogel's Catalague, Archaeological Museum, Mathura, the context dealing with the Iranians and Kushāṇa costumes.

[6] ibid., the Statue of Kaniṣhka.

Sanskrt writers have described them as 'bloodless' meaning thereby their white colour. The beauty of the Śaka women became very marked in India, and was considered resulting from the onion which formed an important item of their menu.[1]

Religion of the Śakas

There is a general impression among the western writers that Śakas hardly had any religious belief or practices. Rawlinson[2] has referred indirectly to certain practices and festivals indicating religious belief of the Śakas prior to their advent to India. According to him, one of the festivals of 'Anaitis' was called Sacaea which was 'accompanied by wild and licentious revels, the celebrants, men and women, indulging in excesses.' This festival is said to be in commemoration of the victory of Cyrus over the Scythians.[3] Rawlinson thinks that 'Anaitis' was a Scythian Goddess and her cult was probably brought into Media

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1. Madhya Asia kā Itihāsa, p.68.
2. Bactria, pp.8-12.
3. Rawlinson, Bactria, p.8; also Strabo, XI,viii, 4-6.

by Cyrus on his return from the East.[1] Quoting Strabo, Rawlinson says, that the Sythian tribes had a custom of throwing the old and infirm to the dogs to devour.[2] This custom was the norm among the Scythians of Bactria, particularly those residing to the north of the Oxus. They did not permit their older folks to die naturally.[3]

It is difficult to accept the writings of contemporary or near contemporary Greeks who do not seem to have come across the ways of Śaka worship. It is believed that early Śakas had many gods, who were like the early Aryan gods. This fact points to the possibility that the early Śakas and Aryans might have lived togather or side by side at some early stage of their civilization.[4]

The most important Śaka god was Sūrya or Swaliyu. This fact can be evidenced not only by Greek writings but also by the fact that the Russians, prior to their conversion to Christianity, worshiped the Sun god; statues

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[1] ibid., p.9.

[2] ibid., pp.11-12.

[3] ibid., p.12; also Strato, XI-11, 8, and X, 5, 6.

[4] Rahul Sankrityayan, *Madhya Asia kā itihāsa*, Part I, pp.68-69.

of the Sun god with Śaka dress are exhibited in the Mathura museum.[1]

Diva was another Śaka god, which is Dyau (द्यौ) of the Vedas and Zeus of the Greeks. The land was worshiped by the name of Apiya or Apya. Swaliyu was considered the son of father Divu and mother Apiya. The parentage of the sun god is the same as Dyāwāpṛthivī (द्यावापृथिवी)[2] of the *Ṛgveda*. Another Śaka god was Paka, who can be Bhaga of the *Ṛgveda*. These examples pointedly draw us to the conclusion that the Śakas may have come across the followers of the vedic religion some time at an early stage.

So much for the early religious beliefs of the Śakas. There is no direct evidence to show that they carried their beliefs and practices with them to India. From a structure discovered at Taxila, which has been identified as a temple,[3] Dr. Marshal, perhaps keeping the association of the Śakas with Iran and Parthia

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1. ibid., p.69.
2. ibid.
3. Marshal, *Taxila*, Vol.I, p.222.

in his mind, is inclined to think that the Śakas were influenced by Iranians in their religions thought.[1] From the presence of a particular kind of tower and absence of images Dr. Marshal thinks that the structure in question was probably a Zoroastrian temple, and that at the time of the construction of this temple, Zoroastriarism or Magianism was the state religion of the Śakas.[2] To substantiate his thesis, he gives the description of the temple by Philostratus in his work 'Life of Appollonius' which is as under:

"They saw a temple in front of the wall, about 100 ft. in length and built of shell like stone. And in it was a shrine which, considering that the temple was so large and provided with a peristyle, was disproportionately small but nevertheless worthy of admiration, for nailed to each of its walls were bronze panels on which were portrayed the deeds of Porus and Alexander; the elephants, horses, soldiers, helmets and shields...., in brass, silver,

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[1] ibid., p.226.

[2] ibid.

In his view, he inclined to think that the Takas were influenced by Greeks in their religious thought,[1] from the presence of a particular kind of towers and absence of images. Dr. Marshall thinks that the structure in question was probably a Zoroastrian temple, and that at the time of the construction of this temple, Zoroastrianism or Mazdaism was the state religion of the Sakas. To substantiate his theory, he gives the description of the temple by Philostratus in his work 'Life of Apollonius' which is as under:

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1. Ibid., p.[illegible].
2. Ibid.

gold and copper ......".[1]

The temple in question is the Jandial temple, situated on the road to Indus and Gandhara. Marshal, however, is himself doubtful about the period to which this temple could belong, and as a result gives conflicting views about the date of its construction, sometimes assigning it to the Śaka, and again in the same description, to the Greek period.[2] However, in his postscript of 17.2.51 he has clearly accepted this to be a structure of the Greek period.[3] In view of this postscript there is no need to analyse the views expressed by him in which he has tried to establish that the Jandial temple was a fire temple and that Śakas followed Zoroastrianism. Similarly if we accept the views of ~~Mr.~~ Marshal that the shrine at Mohra Maliaran about 1000 yards away from Jandial was contemporary to the Jandial temple, we need not examine his views that this shrine as well as Jandial temple were erected by the Śakas in the first century B.C. The

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1. Ibid., p.227.
2. Taxila, Vol.I, pp.224-228.
3. ~~Taxila~~ ibid, Vol.I, p.226.

gods are unique.......[1]

The temple in question is the Jandial temple, situated at the road to [illegible] and [illegible]. Strangely, however, it should [illegible] about the period to which this temple could belong, and as a result diverse conflicting views about the date of its construction, attributing it variously to the [illegible], and again to the post [illegible] period, to the [illegible] period.[2] However, on the evidence of [illegible] it has recently been proved to be a structure of the Greek period.[3] In view of this, perhaps there is no need to analyse the views expressed by him in which he has tried to establish that the Jandial temple was a fire-temple and that [illegible] to accept the theory of Mr. [illegible] that the shrine of [illegible] and its other companion [illegible] temple, we need not analyse the views that this shrine as well as Jandial temple were erected by the [illegible] in the first century A.D. The

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1. Ibid., p.227.
2. [illegible] Vol. I, p.[illegible].
3. [illegible] Vol. I, p.[illegible].

only thing we may have to consider is whether the Śakas, who followed Greeks in Taxila, maintained the fire temple at Jandial or the temple lost its grandeur and appeal when the Śakas took over the city of Taxila. To establish anything about the religious belief of the Śakas, when we have arrived at the conclusion that the Jandial temple and the shrine at Mohra Maliaran belonged to the Greek period, we should keep in the view the fact that :

a) the original home of Śakas was Central Asia and on the borders of China, and in the remote past they had their own religious beliefs and practices which were closer to the beliefs of the early Aryans and for that matter the early Iranians.

b) Their trek from Central Asia to India was rather ~~very~~ hasty and full of strife. All their way they were followed on their heels by another tribe - Tocharis. Wher~~e~~ever they went they were hotly pursued while themselves chasing other tribes.

Both these factors are conducive to the possibility, that whatever cultural and religious belief the Śakas practised while they were in Central Asia, could have waned because of the struggles during their trek to India; whereas there was very little possibility of their acquiring a religious belief from the hostile areas from where they had to flee for their life. There is thus the least possibility of their following the Iranian religious belief.

The monuments and inscriptions discovered from various places in India convincingly point towards the possibility that, inspite of the existance of a fire temple in Taxila and their own religious belief, Buddhism and even Jainism started playing a very important part in the life of the Śakas after their settlement in India. The copper plate inscription of Taxila, already referred to in the foregoing pages, records a gift of Patika, son of Liaka Kusulaka, a Śaka Satrap, to a Buddhist Saṅghārāma

and dedicates a relic of Śākyamuni.[1] A chapal like construction with a small stupa has been discovered from the area which is termed as 'royal palace' at Taxila.[2] From the relic chamber of the stupa a minute relic bone wrapped in a thin covering of gold and placed in a casket of gray schist has been discovered. The structure and position of the ritual altars point to a possibility that this stupa was a Jain rather than a Buddhist one and might have been erected in the place by one of the queens or some other member of the royal family who had adopted Jainism.[3] Since, in a royal household the ruler or the king generally used to wield an absolute or supreme authority, it is possible that the builder of the stupa in question was a person of importance, either the king himself or the chief queen. The Jainism at that time was a dominating faith around Mathura, and it is possible that the faith may have reached Taxila

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[1] ibid., p.58.

[2] ibid., p.173.

[3] ibid., p.173-174.

because of the connection of the Royal houses at Taxila and Mathura.

Thus both, Buddhism and Jainism were accepted faiths of those who occupied positions of social leadership. Buddhism continued long as we find that a generation later a relic of the blessed one (the Buddha) was dedicated at Mathura by Rājubula's queen Ayasia Kamuia and a gift of land was made by her son Śoḍāsa.[1] The Kalawan inscription[2] of the year 134, and the silver scroll inscription[3] of the year 136 also refer to the Buddhist belief of the writers.

From the above evidence and a number of stupas and Buddhist monastries of the age discovered at Taxila, Mathura and other places, it is evident that Buddhism was the main religion though Jainism and Hinduism also prospered and were practised side by side. In the face of so many Buddhist monastries

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[1] ibid., p.58.

[2] Sten Konow, J.R.A.S., 1932, p.949 et.seq.

[3] Marshal, J.H., J.R.A.S., 1914, p.975 et.seq.

and a record of inscriptions dedicated to Buddhism, it is rather illogical and hard to dismiss the case of Buddhism and to accept that Zoroastrianism was the state religion of the Śakas as Dr. Marshal would have us believe. Complete absence of Zoroastrian influence and abundance of Buddhist records and monasteries are indicative of the fact that the Śakas were converted to the Indian religions and idealogies as early as the time of Maues. Even though Buddhism at that time was commonly practised it is possible that the Śakas showed tolerance not only to the Zoroastrian structure at Jandial (which according to a second thought of Dr. Marshal was built by the Greeks) but also to other faiths. The faith of the Śakas may be controversial but this much can be positively asserted that the religion of the masses during the Śaka period was Buddhism and the Śaka rulers tolerated it and allowed their subjects complete freedom to follow their chosen faiths.

Art and Architecture

The finds at Altai in the U.S.S.R., refered to in the foregoing pages, have

brought to light the fact that Śakas had a well developed civilization as early as the 6th century B.C. These finds, the possessions of soldierly chieftains indicate that they were used to a comfortable, though active life.

Excavations at Taxila have brought to light a number of objects of art and architecture which give an idea of their progress in this field. The excavations, particularly those in the area known as Sirkap, have touched a depth of 18 to 23'. Dr. Marshal, who was incharge of these excavations, is of the view that at least 7 successive strata of remains are distinguishable. He has assigned various epochs of civilization to these strata. The details given by Dr. Marshal are as below[1] :

1. Pre-Greek period, stratum 7
   (from 18 to 22')
2. Greek period, strata 5 and 6
   (from 13 to 18')
3. Early Śaka period, stratum 4
   (from 8 to 13')
4. Later Śaka-Parthian period, strata 2 and 3
   (from 2 to 9')
5. Kushan period, stratum 1
   (upto 2 feet)

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[1] *Taxila*, Vol.I., pp.113-118.

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   (from 2 to 9')
5. Kushan period, stratum 1
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[1] Taxila, Vol.I., pp.113-118.

The above division of strata may be scientifically true, but it is never safe to conclude that the remains found from a particular stratum belong exclusively to a particular civilization. While analysing finds connected with ancient India, we must take into account the fact that people had the tendency to bury their wealth deep in the ground either in their houses or elsewhere, for fear of loss by natural calamities and theft. Such precautions could have been more, because, the period of Indian history under review witnessed a general political unrest and insecurity, making lives and property of people exposed to a perpetual danger. It was, therefore, natural that people were more careful to safeguard their valuables, and deposited some of them deep into the earth. It is difficult to draw a line of demarcation between one civilization and another, and in this case, when we know that the Śakas occupied Greek territories and copied Greek ways of living, it would be more difficult to assign any particular stratum to the Greeks or to the Śakas.

Moreover, the floor and foundation level, as has been pointed out by Dr. Marshal,[1] vary to a considerable extent from building to building and even from room to room, thus further complicating any precise demarcation of the Strata.

From the excavations at Taxila it is clear that the Śakas, by the time they reached Taxila, had developed a taste for city life. The excavations reveal that, about a quarter of the city was mainly occupied by the royal palace and the residences of the wealthier citizens. This pattern of buildings points to the possibility that only the rich lived in cities whereas the common men either lived in rural areas or in less important parts of the city.[2]

The lay out of the Śaka-Parthian city of Taxila was on a chess-board pattern and can conform to Hallenistic models. The streets were at right angles to one another. The main street ran from north to south and the side streets

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1. ibid., p.118.
2. ibid., p.197-198.

from east to west. Between the side streets, which were at regular intervals, (averaging about 120') there stood the blocks of buildings. The general design of these buildings had a row of small shops facing the main street, and the living houses were built behind the aforesaid row. In some of the streets the row of shops on the main street had been abruptly broken, perhaps to accommodate a shrine or some like structure.[1]

In their plan of building the houses display variety. However, most of the houses were based on the same principle, i.e. a design consisting of an open court enclosed by chambers on all sides. This pattern was repeated if a bigger house was to be constructed. The large number of houses are of the average size but the houses of the wealthier classes were bigger and had plenty of accommodation. Such ones possessed 3 or 4 open courts with a good number of chambers. Some of the bigger houses covered an area of some 15000 sq.feet. In such houses

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1. ibid., pp.139 and 198.

it appears that a separate block was built for women folk and another for servants. In some of them the size of the rooms on the ground floor was small. It indicates that they were either used as store rooms or were meant to serve as quarters for servants.[1]

The material used for the construction of walls was stone rubble, more or less coursed in mud. The walls of the buildings were protected with lime plaster on the exposed exterior, and with a mud plaster on the interior surface. The walls were either whitewashed or colour washed in order to provide a final finish to the surface. Sometimes simple decorative schemes were also worked out in several colours.[2] The upper floor and rooms as well as varandas and doors and small fittings were made of timber. The roofs were generally flat and were covered with a thick layer of mud.[3]

One of the important buildings excavated appears to be the royal palace. This building was just like others except that it was

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1. ibid., p. 198.
2. ibid., pp.138, 198.
3. ibid., p.199.

larger and more glorified[1] containing a number of courts. There is no basement perhaps because basement rooms were not considered necessary in view of the strength and stability of the walls. Other important buildings are the Jandial temple and a stupa of the double headed eagle. The stupa was perhaps a Buddhist monument. According to ~~Dr~~. Marshal "the form of the monument is characteristically Buddhist, though the square base may have been a foreign innovation."[2] He has not given any argument to establish the foreign origin of the base and, therefore, there seems to be no reason to accept this contention.

The excavations do not throw any light on the general appearance of the houses and their architecture. Since the wood work has completely perished it is not possible to say anything about the decoration or carving done on the wood. In spite of the absence of evidence Dr. Marshal has asserted that the wood work may have been as elaboratedly carved as it is in many Indian houses today.[3] His contention is

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1. ibid., p.201.
2. ibid., p.202.
3. ibid., p.201.

larger and more glorified containing a hundred[1] rooms. There is no basement perhaps because basement rooms were not considered necessary in view of the strength and stability of the walls. Other important buildings are the Apsidal temple and a stupa of the double headed eagle. The stupa was perhaps a Buddhist monument. According to Dr. Marshal "the form of the monument is characteristically Buddhist, though the square base may have been a foreign innovation." He has not given any argument to establish the foreign origin of the base and, therefore, there seems to be no reason to accept his contention.

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1. Ibid., p.[illegible].
2. Ibid., p.[illegible].
3. Ibid., p.[illegible].

primarily based on the discovery of contemporary reliefs from the Gandhāra area, which depict architectural carvings of a high order.

Remains of some sort of drainage have also been uncovered at Taxila. This drainage system, however, is certainly not like the one at Mohenjo-Daro. The drains of Taxila are partly covered and partly uncovered. No drain has been discovered in the main street though a culvert found at the north gate points to the possibility of the main drain flowing through that street. Dr. Marshal suggests that perhaps all these drains were meant to drain out the rain water.[1] However, the area has always had scanty rainfall and there appears no reason to imagine an elaborate drainage system for the purpose. The drains may have been used for the disposal of sewage and other dirty water from the houses, because such a big city could hardly do without a system of drainage.

A number of objects of art were discovered from the buildings excavated

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1. ibid., p.199.

at Taxila. These antiquities vary from personal ornaments to pieces of decoration and toys for children. They are mainly articles of personal effect including gold and silver jewellery, toilet articles, household vessels and utensils, tools used by carpenters and smiths, horticultural and gardening implements, surgical and other instruments, play things for children, dice, weapons and armour, horse-trappings and elephant goads, articles of worship, seals and sealings, moulds and stamps for stamping pottery and textiles, and metal dies for fashioning ornaments and casting coins.

The Śaka potters, very like their predecessors, produced a large variety of domestic vessels, with the like of which people are familiar in the Punjab even today. The pottery discovered at Taxila consists of all types of domestic vessels such as jars, water pots, receptacles to keep oils and wines, cooking pots, cups, basins, dishes etc. Most of these articles are of very little artistic value.[1]

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[1] ibid., p.399, also p.131.

at Taxila. These remains vary from personal ornaments to pieces of decorations and toys for children. They are mainly articles of personal effects including gold and silver jewellery, toilet articles, household vessels and utensils, tools used by carpenters and smiths, agricultural and gardening implements, surgical and other instruments, play things for children, dice, weapons and armour, horse-trappings and elephants goads, articles of worship, seals and sealings, moulds and dies for stamping pottery and jewellery, and also dies for fashioning ornaments and earthen wares.

The Taxila potters, very like their predecessors, produced a large variety of domestic vessels, with the like of which people are familiar in the Punjab even today. The pottery discovered at Taxila consists of all types of domestic vessels such as large water pots, receptacles to keep milk and curds, cooking pots, cups, basins, dishes etc. Most of these articles are of very simple ordinary shapes

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1. Ibid., p.209, also p.161.

We may, however, keep it in mind that the pottery discovered at Taxila is mostly domestic and its design and texture depended on its use, and was made by very ordinary potters, who never aimed nor claimed to create articles of artistic value. This pottery was influenced by tradition rather than by outside influences. Some painted pottery was discovered and ~~Dr~~. Marshal is inclined to remark that the decoration is unimaginative.[1] As a matter of fact painted pottery is rare and whatever pottery is there falls in the following categories:

1. Red black painted ware
2. Coarse brown and buff painted ware
3. Black varnished ware, and
4. Glazed ware

While some of the pottery, no doubt, bear Graeco-Roman influence, most of it, with the black-on-red painting, a feature of the pre-Greek technique, tell the tale of creeping Indianization.[2]

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[1] ibid., Vol.II, p.400.

[2] Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.132 et.seq.

In ancient India clay was used for fashioning and designing of many objects besides the pottery, such as figurines, toys, vessels, ~~etc~~. Some of the very fine Buddhist figures of sup~~p~~er human size of the later Śaka-Kuṣāṇa period are very good examples of this type of art. Most of these objects, particularly those which were liable to rough handling by children, were baked and converted into terra-cotta whereas others were merely dried in the sun and their surface was finished with decorative colours.[1]

Many articles made of iron and steel have also been discovered. They are cooking pots or cauldrons, tripods, bowls, dishes and saucers, frying and baking pans, steel pans, lamps, incense burners, shovels, bells, keys, lock pads, folding chairs, daggers, armour, helmet, etc. Some argicultural implements have also been found.[2] From a very early period India is known for the high quality of its iron and

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[1] *Taxila*, Vol.II, p.439, also Vol.I, p.133.

[2] ~~Marshal, Taxila~~ ibid, Vol.II, p.538 and 539.

steel and the literary evidence about the excellence of this metal has been fully collaborated in the micro examination of selected specimens of finds discovered from Taxila and Besnagar near Vidiśā. An examination of a specimen from Taxila has established that high quality of iron and steel was known to that age. From the finds we can easily conclude that at that age iron and steel were being used not merely for the manufacture of weapons of war, but also for that of articles for household use.

Articles of copper (ayas) and other alloys were known in ancient India for quite some time. As a matter of fact the iron (śyāmaayas) came into use long after the use of copper. The articles of copper and other alloys found at Taxila are bracelets, bangles, armlets, pendants and broaches, hair pins, bowls and cups, incense bowls, inkpots, surgical and other equipment, hangers, tooth-picks and ear cleaners and so many other items of daily use.[1] These articles

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[1] ibid., pp.576-577.

were manufactured either by hammering ~~matter~~ metal into appropriate shape of the vessel, ornaments, etc. or by solid or hollow casting or by embossing.

A number of articles of gold and silver have also been discovered from various strata of the ruins. Of these one is from the 4th stratum assigned to the early Śakas and some from the 3rd assigned to the later ones. Most of these ornaments and jewellary is of the first century A.D. and the fact that they were discovered from a different stratum should not be taken to mean that they belonged to that particular period.[1] As has been inferred earlier, the gold and silver ornaments were bur~~r~~ied at various depths resulting in their discovery from various strata.

The bone and ivory objects have been assigned to the period between the 2nd century B.C. and 1st century A.D. These are combs, ear-cleaners, tooth-picks, etc.[2] Dr. Marshal is inclined to suggest that some of the articles were imported either from Greece or other Western countries. His

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1. ibid., pp.638-639.
2. ibid., p.651.

argument is based on the ignorance of the basic fact that the elephant and the ivory were unknown to the Greeks, and it is rather impossible to believe that the Greek artists and artisans could learn to handle so delicate a material as ivory so well that they could produce superior wares which could be exported to a country famous for ivory goods and bonewares since times immemorial. It will not be out of place here to mention that an ivory Yakṣ~~h~~i figure, fashioned after the Yakṣ~~h~~i reliefs of Mathura, found its way right about then (in the first century A.D.) to the great city of Pompei from the ruins of which it has now been recovered.

Articles made from shell consisted of beads and bangles. Use of shell for manufacture of such articles goes back to a remote antiquity in India, and the raw material available round the long coastline of the country was freely used for this purpose. In addition to beads and bangles a few other articles have also been discovered.[1] These include various types of seals and sealings. Seals were made of stone,

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[1] ibid., pp.667-668.

glass, copper, bronze, silver, and also of stucco and clay converted into terracotta. A considerable number of seals has been found at Taxila. Some of these were perhaps meant for practical use besides made to serve as ornaments. Possibly a few might have even been imported from Persia or Roman territories, but most of them were, without doubt, made locally.[1] The devices and legends incised on these seals are common or similar to those on the coins of the age. There is, therefore, a possibility that the seals and coins were perhaps made by the same workmen.[2] The fact that the mints used for making coins were owned and controlled by rulers, it may lead us to assume that the seals and sealings manufactured in the royal mints were official seals and were used for the official work of the state. It also suggests that these were manufactured locally for there could be no point to import them from

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1. *Taxila*, Vol.I, pp.674-675.
2. ~~Marshal, Taxila,~~ ibid., Vol.II, p.680.

outside,[1] as sought to be held sometimes. Such a suggestion is not sustainable, particularly when we know that the Indian artist of the period was doing most other jobs of the kind and was unknowingly developing the art which he assimilated from the Greeks on a pattern that would develop into one of the most perfect arts of the country.

A number of glass objects have also come to light at Taxila. These include beads and bangles of various colours, small vessels, toys and some miscellaneous articles.[2] Use of glass was known in ancient India from an unknown period; something very near to glass, discovered from Mohan-jo-Daro, bears testimony to this. We can, therefore, safely infer that the glass objects discovered from Taxila were indigenous in manufacture. All the same, the possibility remains that some of these articles were imported[3] from

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[1] Dr. Marshal (Taxila, Vol.II, p.681) has suggested that inspite of the bad workmanship, some of the seals were imported either from Greece or from Rome, adding that "bad engraving could be done just as much in Greece and Italy as in India".

[2] Marshal, Taxila, Vol.II, pp.683-686.

[3] ~~Marshal, Taxila~~ ibid, Vol.II, pp.685-687.

other countries with which India had trade relations from very early period. The *Periplus* refers to the export of crude glass from Alexandria to Barygaza and other towns of the western coast. Certain glassware finds excavated at Begram in Afghanistan are also supposed to be of foreign origin.[1] This may suggest that some of the finds of the Śaka period excavated at Taxila may have been imported.

A number of stone sculptures[2] and other articles made of stone have been unearthed from various strata at Taxila. The dates of these sculptures cannot be determined precisely. The general view is that most of the finds at Taxila should belong to the period between 30 B.C. and 40 A.D.[3] The fact that suitable stone for sculptural work is not available at Taxila, goes to prove that perhaps stone was imported from other parts of the country and then carved at Taxila, or else the sculptures and other articles were brought from other areas.

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1. ibid.
2. For details of the finds see *Taxila*, Vol.II, pp. 691-693.
3. ibid., p.694.

A logical conclusion, that follows a careful study of the stone sculptures of the period, is that the Gandhāra school of art was not an immediate offspring of Bactrian and Greek art, but it arose and took shape during[1] the Śaka rule in north western India, at a time when the Greek art in the area was flickering out, leaving behind a few monuments, not only to impress upon the posterity of its grandeur but also to serve as an inspiration for further development of art. This Greek legacy was further enriched by Parthian ideas which Śakas might have acquired from their close contacts with the Parthian empire. Thus, imbued with Indo-Parthian and Indo-Hellanistic ideas, they became instrumental in bringing them together and fuse them into an independent school of art. The result was that 'soon the auteliers of India started resounding with the strokes of the chisel which filled the repertoires and temples with the peaceful images of Tathāgata, the blissful solace to the millions.[2]'

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1. Taxila, Vol.II, p.694.
2. Dr. B.S.Upadhyaya, Leaders of Indian culture part-7. It is part of a series of the article, published in the New Age, 1970.

Thus the Gandhāra art, that was to reach a culminating point during the Kuṣhāṇas and Guptas, must trace its origin and basic development to the rule of the Śakas, who provided a protective shield at a period of strife and turmoil.

The result of the mixture of different cultures

The impact of the free mixing of various cultures brought about by the Śakas was not confined only to the field of art and architecture. It had far reaching effects on the Indian social order. It resulted in the birth of a hybrid culture imbued with idealogies of so many civilizations. The Śakas played an important rôle in not only protecting this new growth, but also in shaping it in a manner acceptable to the Indian society. The ideas developed with the help of the Śakas influenced not only the arts but also the religious thought, language and literature, astronomy and astrology, dress and ornaments, food and drink, in short, the entire social order of the time.

While the Gandhāra art was taking shape, the Mathura school of art, which

was known for its rich style, was also being activized. Though the earliest finds from Mathura, 'represented by a few fragmentary sculptures, are closely related to the art of Bharhut,' and, possibly belong to the second century B.C., the Mathura school as such, actually became active in the first century of the Christian era,[1] and was thus a definite legacy of the early Śakas of the north western India. It was, perhaps, due to the political stability that resulted from the Śaka rule and later due to the royal patronage by the Śaka Satraps of Mathura, that by the beginning of the Christian era the Mathura school started producing unceasingly for centuries to come such varied works of art as earned for her a position of pride in the contemporary world and then enabled her to export its products to Taxila and countries in Central Asia,[2] and to cities like Pompei. The statues of the Śaka-Kuṣhāṇa kings, clad in Central Asian Scythic dress, indicate the possibility that the artist designing them

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1. Sircar, A.I.U., p.522.
2. Ibid.

was a Śaka.[1] It was, therefore, a natural outcome that the Scythic tradition reflected in the statues of kings passed on its angularity of compositional arrangement to the pattern of the seated or standing Buddha and Bodhisattva images of Mathura.[2]

An intimate connection of this art with that of Bharhut is clearly visible, except that 'what had been a spontaneous movement has now become conscious gestures, and what stood for symbols or emblems have now become vehicles of sensuous and erotic suggestiveness. Full round breasts and heavy hips are no longer just conveyers of the idea of fertility but suggest warm and living flesh, relaxed or tight.....'[3] The aim is visibly sensual and results in erotic and suggestive attitudes.

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1. ibid., p.524.
2. ibid.
3. ibid., p.524.

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CHAPTER VII

Language and Literature

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The Śakas were a virile people given to warfare and favouring a restive mode of life. Their possessions were limited to their horse and lance and, at the best their fighting equipment. From the paucity of coherent records one would naturally conclude that like the war-lords and barons of the Elizabethan times the Śaka chiefs and their soldiery did not favour the Muses. May be they even looked down upon the possible versifiers. It may be conjectured that they had, however, among their midst men and women who sang and danced and made their hard life easy. But since no record or evidence of any composition has been discovered anywhere from their extended settlements from almost the borders of China to the valley of the Danube and from the middle of the second millennuim B.C. to the 2nd. century B.C., the guess is irresistable that theirs was pre-eminently a life of unrelieved soldiery.

To suppose that their literature might have been lost through the inclemency of elements will hardly stand scrutiny as, after all, the peoples contemporaneous with them during the stretch of their history and the climes of their habitats have left behind records, and on bases that were almost undestructible as compared to the subsequent material for writing. ‘Ever since man struck fire from the flints and invented the lettered sound,’ indeed from a time much earlier when only pictography and ideography communicated thoughts, he has been seeking the means and modes of not only expressing his ideas but recording them so as to leave to his posterity not only a language but emotional and creative literature.

From the Egyptian "Book of the Dead"[1] inscribed and painted on the pyramidal walls down to the Assyrian panygerical epigraphs, from the Sumerian "Gilgamesh"[2] down to the library

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[1] Will Durant, The Story of Civilization, Vol. I, Our Oriental Heritage, pp.202-203 and 371.

[2] ibid., pp.250-254, 120, 132, 261.

of Ashurbanipal[1] and again from the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi[2] down to the innumerable inscriptions of the Hittites[3] and Mitannis,[4] many of which wrote regular treaties[5] and international letters, human efforts to create legal and polite literature has been universal and extraordinarily successful. It is obvious therefore that the Śakas in their original homes in Central Asia refused to pursue the callings of the scribe and the poetaster, or else it could have been indeed impossible to evade the norm of cultivating literature which was so natural to their contemporaries down to the days of Darius. It is easy to understand if the Śakas could preserve the corpses of their men and horses they could well have preserved their records in case they had attempted to create any.

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1. ibid., pp.274-277.
2. ibid., pp.246-247.
3. ibid., pp.286-287.
4. ibid., pp.266, 285-286.
5. ibid., cf. Boghaz-Köi, p.286.

Inspite of the absence of literature of the early Śakas, we can take note of a few incidents which are very relevant in this context. It is generally believed that the language of the early Śakas was adopted by the Kuṣhāṇas, and that the Śaka language of the Kuṣhāṇas was reduced to writing in Greek letters either in Bactria or at Kapiśā.[1]

But their appearance on the scene of literary activities extensively favoured in India developed a new faculty in them, that of imbibing the life and culture of the land of their adoption. India had been particularly rich in language and literature. The Vedic and post Vedic times had already produced not only remarkable philosophically speculative literature but such an immensity of it that the language had needed grammarians of the calibre of Pāṇini and his predecessors[2] to discipline it. By the time the Śakas arrived in India the composition of the

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1. Tarn, G.B.I., pp.63 and 305; also Thomas, J.R.A.S., 1913, p.1016. He holds in f.n.1 that it is 'nearer a certainty than conjecture.'

2. Keith, A.B., A History of Sanskrit Literature, pp.422-425.

Upnishads[1] and of the Dharma Sutras[2] had been completed and the drafts of the early Smṛtis were ready. It is difficult to assign dramatical literature to a period prior to the Śakas but aphorisms of Bharata,[3] done quite a few centuries earlier, had certainly borne on actual plays.

The Śakas had a lot of harvest to gather from their antecidents and the contemporary. Their long association with the Achamaenian emperors and their Parthian successors had given them the culture the items of which they had certainly imbibed and the rich Persian language had endowed them with a sensitivity that now was put to the test and found successful. The Greeks had just retired from the Indian scene who had much to bequeath to the land where they lived and ruled. Much of their history they adopted for their model, struck coins after their currency and incised legends on them in bilingual scripts. In India the Śakas turned out to be what they never had been before. They seem to have developed a faculty on reaching India to learn

State Museum Library
7229
Lucknow

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1. ibid., pp.404-405.
2. ibid., pp.437-440.
3. ibid., p.407.

[illegible] use of the [illegible] during [illegible][1] [illegible] The [illegible] writers were [illegible]. It is [illegible] literature to a [illegible] of the [illegible] quality, had certainly [illegible].

The [illegible] had a lot of [illegible] to grow from their antecedents and the contemporary. [illegible] had grown from the [illegible] they had [illegible] language had [illegible] [illegible] and imitate and to put to use whatever they learnt. Like the Romans, although they were no original creaters, they certainly, like them, could repeat and recreate solemnly what came their way. The brief inscriptions, votive or secular, cannot of course speak much in ~~the~~ favour of their literary attempts, looking mainly to the fact that Asoka a few centuries ago had already caused to be incised epigraphs extensive in composition and extensively located. Soon, however, after accepting as their own the faiths of India they even sought to emulate the ways of the local rulers. Rudradaman's extensive records of his exploits on a rock at Girnar in exquisite prose is the first specimen of its kind in Sanskrit. Asoka composed his edicts in Pali, and the Śātavāhanas, the Brahmin rulers of the south, wrote their records in Prakrit and except for the stray and meagre attempts of the Śuṅgas there had been no attempt at reviving the prose after the Brāhmaṇas written about eight hundred to a thousand years before. The prose of the and imitate and to put to use whatever they learnt. Like the Persians, although they were no original creators, they certainly, like them, could repeat and reproduce minutely what came their way. The chief inscriptions, sacred or secular, except of certain grants made in the favour of their literary attempts, looking mainly to the fact that about a few centuries ago had already ceased to be indeed epigraphs extensive in composition and elaborately learned. Here, however, after occupying as their own the rest of India they even sought to emulate the work of the local rulers. [illegible] [illegible] records of his exploits [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] eulogistic prose in the first specimen of its kind in Sanskrit. [illegible] composed his [illegible] in verse, and the [illegible], the [illegible] rulers of the south, wrote their records in [illegible] and except for the crisp and concise [illegible] of the [illegible] there had been no attempt at [illegible] the [illegible] after the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] up a thousand years before. The first of the

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[1] [illegible]

[2] [illegible]

[3] [illegible]

Brāhmaṇas had by now, i.e. the opening centuries of the Christian era, become outlandish and uncomprehensible. Rudradāman, the Śaka Satrap, himself master of grammar, polity, music and logic and an adept in composing literary pieces in prose and verse, got inscribed in the middle of the second century A.D. the first composition in classical Sanskrit.[1] This inscription of Rudradāman is a tribute not only to the Śakas' love for the country and its language but a challenge to all contemporary epigraph recording rulers.

It is true that this record of Rudradāman is almost the sole representative of the Śakas' attempt at creating literary pieces, it can be held without any possibility of contradiction that although other Śaka rulers may not have followed Rudradāman's genius they cultivated uncommon patronage of literature. Ujjayinī, the capital of Avantī, later of ~~western~~ Malwa, remained for a fair long time the capital of the Śaka Satraps and there much of the foundations

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[1] Bagchi, P.C., and Raghavan V., Hist. Ind.Ch. XX, p.632; also Sircar, D.C., A.I.U., p.185.

of Sanskrit literature, both in Kāvya and Drama, were laid under the Śaka patronage.[1] The Śakas took from the Kuṣāṇas their era and used it so frequently and exclusively apart from the Kuṣāṇas themselves, that it came to be associated with them, which as Śaka Saṁvat has come down to our times and declared the national calender of India. The astronomy which the Greeks introduced in India was propagated extensively by the Śaka rulers from the centre of their capital Ujjayinī which they made the meridian for astronomical calculations. This aspect of our study, however, we shall take up in the next chapter.

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[1] ibid.

CHAPTER VIII

Astronomy and Astrology

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✓ The belief that the celestial bodies influence fate and future of mankind, and that future can be predicted on the basis of the influence of these bodies, can be traced to a very early period of Indian history.[1] And this belief of predicting the future events led to the development of the Sciences of astronomy and astrology. The Babylonians were the first to study the stars.

Though very little reference to the astronomical study is made in the literature of the Vedic period, method of reckoning of the year, however vague, was known at that time.[2] By the close of the vedic period a calculated calendar was developed; and a calendar, arranged on the basis of a five year Yuga with a 366 day year was in use.[3] Though the position of the sun and the moon at the solstices, and at new and

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[1] Keith A.B., A History of Sanskrit Literature, London, 1961, p.528.

[2] ibid., p.517.

[3] ibid.

full moon with regard to Nakṣatras was known, there was yet a general ignorance regarding the motions of the sun and the moon, resulting in the faulty calculation of months and years.[1] But, in spite of the limitations of this early system of reckoning, it did bequeath to the posterity the idea of a Yuga, a period during which a complete change of the heavenly bodies occurs and that of a lunar day or tithi .. the thirtieth part of a synodical month.[2] However insignificant this contribution may be, it has its importance inasmuch as it provides a base for future development of these sciences.

The early Indian astronomy and astrology was influenced by the Greek thought at sometime~~s~~ during the period 200 B.C. to 500 A.D. It will not be worth a while to fix any definite date for this, as mixing of ideas and philosophies is a prolonged process, requiring a long span of time. However, from the Pañchasiddhāntikā of Varāhamihira we can infer that Greek ideas of astronomy and astrology were adopted and used in

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1. ibid.
2. ibid.

this country as an accepted science. The credit of founding astronomy as a science is given by Garga to the Greeks. He says that though the Greeks are *mlechchhās*, they are to be venerated like the sages, ṛsis, as the science of astronomy has originated with them. It is believed that Varāhamihira completed his works by 550 A.D.,[1] giving information of the contents of the five Siddhāntas of an earlier date.[2] Of these five principles, the two, viz the Romaka and the Pauliśa, evidently bear non-Indian names, and ascribe to Greek influence. The Romaka may be connected with Rome or the Roman empire, and the Pauliśa indicates some connection with the name Paulus Alexandrinus.[3] The Romaka follows its own Yuga system, 'the Metonic period of nineteen years multiplied by 150 which gives the smallest Yuga exactly divisible into integral numbers of lunar months and civil days'; and it also makes calculations for meridian of Yavanapura- which,

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1. ibid.
2. ibid., pp.517-18.
3. ibid., p.518.

no doubt was Alexandria.[1] There is reason to believe that the word Romaka, though points to a connection with Rome, actually means the meridian city in the Roman empire, which no doubt, was Alexandria. The knowledge of astronomy, which was first established by the Greeks, actually came from Alexandria, and it was perhaps due to the fame of the Roman empire that it came to be associated with the metropolis of the empire.[2] In fact almost all the five can be taken to have originated outside India. The Sūrya Siddhanta and the one having its originator Yavanācharya can easily be referred to the same Greek source.[3]

The Pauliśa Siddhānta did not follow any of the Yuga systems mentioned above. It operates with specially calculated short periods of time and it gives the difference in longitude between the Yavanapura and the Indian meridian located at Ujjain.[4]

Referring to Kay's Hindu Astronomy, Keith[5] sums up the Greek derivation

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1. ibid., p.518, f.n.1.
2. ibid., p.518.
3. For a fuller discussion see Keith, History of Sanskrit Literature, Also cf. R.A.Jairam Bhai Foreign ~~bhajus for.~~ Inf.in Ind.His., pp.516
4. ibid.
5. ibid., pp.518-19, also Kays, Hindu Astronomy, pp.30.

in the Siddhāntas as follows. "The division of the ecliptic into the Nakṣatras yeilds to that into the signs of the Zodiac, with names borrowed from Greek; the motions of the planets, hitherto neglected, came to be explained by the doctrine of epicycles; the notion of parallax and methods of calculating it were introduced; new methods of calculating eclipses appeared; heliacal rising and setting of heavenly bodies as studied, specially with astrological reference; correct measurements of day and night were achieved; the length of the year was revised, and the names of the planetary week-days were introduced."

The exact mode and date of the introduction of these Greek elements have been disputed; and the problem is further aggravated by the fact that we do not know about the progress of Greek astronomy during the period from Hipparchos and Ptolemy. Moreover, the Indian Siddhāntas, such as the Sūrya, do not indicate a mere borrowing of ideas and philosophies or even adaptation of knowledge, but, they were a

combination of and further development on independent lines of the elements borrowed in the shape of practical rules and vague hints at a theory.[1] Basing his argument on the date of Lāta and his commentry on the Romaka Siddhānta, Keith is inclined to fix A.D. 300-500, as the possible period during which the borrowing of ideas took place.[2] However, Keith himself is doubtful about these dates, and we shall presently see that his doubt is well founded.

Astronomy and Astrology go together during their earlier stages of development. As has been pointed out earlier that right from a very early time people in India believed in luck and in the impact of celestial bodies on fate. References in the Brāhmaṇas and the Sūtras indicate that the idea of a lucky star was well recognised.[3] Dharmasutras and the *Arthaśāstra* not only give the need of an astrologer but also indicate his essential place in the court of a king.[4] The need of an astrologer was

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1. ibid., p.520.
2. ibid.
3. ibid., p.528.
4. ibid.

recognised not in peace only but also in war, where he could foretell the results and could serve as a morale booster for the soldiery.[1]

There were numerous books on astrology. Varāhamihira, whose work caused all older text books to disappear, mentions various authorities such as Asita, Devala, Garga, Vrddha, Nārada and Parāśara. Varāhamihira gives three branches of Jyotiṣa, viz. astronomical and mathematical foundation called Tantra, the branch dealing with horscopes called Hora, and natural astrology called Saṃhitā.[2] The word Horā is obviously a Greek word.[3]

On Hora section of astrology, Varāhamihira has written a Bṛhat and a Laghu Jātaka.[4] The influence of Greek astrology appears complete, and is indicated by the borrowing of not only the name of the branch but also other Greek terminology, giving an Indian tinge as far as possible.[5] The names of the Houses are given as

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1. ibid.
2. ibid., p.529.
3. ibid.
4. ibid., p.530.
5. ibid.

Horā, Paṇaphara, Apoklima, Hibuka, Trikoṇa, Jāmitra, Mesuraṇa, the signs of the Zodiac include Kriya, Tavuri, Jituma, Leya, Pathona, Juka, Kaurpya, Taukṣika, Anokero, Hṛdroga, and Itthya.[1] All these clearly indicate the Greek influence on Indian astrology.

Vrāhamihira has mentioned various authorities recognised in the subject of astrology, and among various Indian authorities, he mentions a Yavanāchārya,[2] thereby indicating that Greek astrologers were recognised in India. There is, thus, a possibility that a free exchange of ideas and ideologies existed at the time Varāhamihira wrote his works. It is, however, difficult to fix a precise period when this exchange took place. Jacobi is of the view that this happened before fourth century A.D.[3] However, this date cannot be taken as certain as references have been made to certain Yavanāchāryas as early as second century A.D.[4] It is therefore

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[1] ibid.

[2] ibid.

[3] ibid., cf. Fleet, J.R.A.S., 1912, pp.1039.

[4] Keith, A.B., ibid., p.531.

certain that Greek and Indian astrology came in contact much earlier. The Greeks ruled over the north-western India for more than a century and may have imported the knowledge of their astronomy and astrology to Indians in the study of their Hellenistic Gandhāra art during their rule. The proper propagation, however, was left to be done by the Śakas who followed them.

The earliest contact of the Greeks with India was made when Alexander touched the north western border of this country although the intermingling of the Greeks and Indians during the rule of the Dariuses cannot be altogether ruled out. This contact was, however, very short lived and, therefore, could not have left much of a legacy behind. At a later stage two branches of Greek princes established kingdoms in the western and north-western India, and this can be the period when Greeks came in direct contact with India, and can, therefore, be taken as the starting point for Greek influence on Indian culture and civilization. But the Greek

influence on Indian astronomy and astrology appears to have taken a shape only during the Śaka rule,[1] mainly because the development of Greek astronomy and astrology was yet in an early stage at the time when Greeks were ruling over parts of India. Moreover, the Greek houses of western and north western India were drawn in a constant struggle to retain their political power; and disturbed political order is hardly congenial to finer social, cultural and educational pursuits. It was left to their successors, the Śakas, to establish political stability and develop a social order out of the remnants of various cultures they inherited. It has been established that the Śakas of Ujjain and Saurashtra patronized art and literature and it was under the Kardamakas that the city of Ujjain became the most important seat of learning.[2] Ujjain had a name in astronomy and astrology and references in Varahamihira, already

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1. Upadhyaya, Dr. B.S., Hindi Sahitya Kā Brihat Itihāsa, Part V, Varanasi, Sam. 2014, p.709.
2. Dr. Upadhyaya, ibid., Dr. Sircar D.C. A.I.U., p.185.

referred to in earlier pages, lead us to believe that the town was taken as base for astronomical calculations. The name Varahamihira itself appears to be a Śaka-Parthian name, and it has tempted some to infer that he was a Śaka.[1] When we know the service he rendered to bring Greek and Indian astronomy and astrology together, it is all the more significant in the context of the part that Śakas played to develop these sciences in India.

ŚAKA ERA

From a number of inscriptions of the early Śaka era we learn that the Śakas were accustomed to dating events. Some of the illustrations of dated inscriptions are :

1. Taxila Copper plate inscription in the year 78 of an era believed to have been started by Maues.[2]

2. The Copper plate inscription discovered at Kalawan three miles south-east of Sirkap (Taxila) and dated in the year 134 of an era assigned to Azes;[3]

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[1] Dr. Upadhyaya, B.S., ibid.

[2] Fleet, J.F., J.R.A.S., 1907, p.1014.

[3] H.K.Deb, I.H.Q., IX, 1933, p.141.

3. The silver scrol inscription discovered at Taxila and dated in the year 136 of the aforesaid era of Azes.[1]

Since the dates occurring on these inscriptions do not specify the era, there is a general controversy among scholars about these dates. Divergent views have been expressed, and an impression has emerged that more than one type of reckoning was prevalent.

The copper plate inscription discovered from Taxila was first edited by Dowson in 1863, but Dowson did not offer any suggestion about the nature of the era used in the record. The same year Cunningham came forward with his reading and translation of the record; he put forth the view that the era had its initial date in the year 163 B.C., when the Sok—the Śakas, occupied Transoxiana.[2] Gardener,[3] however, felt that the year in question denoted

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[1] ibid.; also Marshal, J.H., J.R.A.S., 1914, p.976.

[2] A.S.I., Archaeological Report for the year 1863-64, published in 1871, Vol.II, pp.54,59 and 187; also Dr. Fleet, J.R.A.S. 1907, p.1013 et.seq.

[3] B.M.C., (Introduction) pp.33 and 40.

the year 78 of an era established by king Maues himself. Later, Cunningham also expressed a general agreement with the views expressed by Gardener.[1] Dr. D.R. Bhandarkar,[2] however, rejected this view and suggested that the era was founded by Vonones. According to Dr. Bhandarkar, Maues was the last member of the Śaka dynasty established by Vonones, who, while establishing the dynasty, also established an era, and that the year 78 of the Taxila record is the year 78 of that era. The most interesting view is, however, expressed by Dr. Smith.[3] According to him, the Taxila record is not dated in the year 78 of an era founded by Maues (or by Vonones) but this is a year in the reign of Maues. The year 78 is of a reckoning what he calls the 'laukika' or popular reckoning of Kashmir. He quotes Alberuni to say that 'common people in India date by the years of a centennium which they call samvatsara. When a centennium is finished, they drop it, and

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1. ibid., Vol.II. p.8.
2. J.B.B.R.A.S., Vol.XX, p.292, 293.
3. Cited from Dr. Fleet, J.R.A.S. 1907, pp.1020-21, 1043.

simply begin to date by a new one. This era is called lokakāla, i.e., the era of the nation at large.[1] Smith accepts the statement of Alberuni and feels that the lokakāla was the Laukika era, also called Pahuri and Saptarṣi era, which was a cycle of the seven Ṛṣis. This cycle consists of 27 centuries during which period the stars of the Great Bear are supposed to perform certain motions among the 27 constellations known as the lunar mansions.[2] However, this view of Smith need not be taken note of, as he has himself given a number of contradictory views in a span of a couple of years. Moreover, he has confused the lokakāla with the Laukika, Saptarṣi and Kali Yuga eras, perhaps not knowing that the system of omitted hundreds or a laukika reckoning was not used in early times and was perhaps devised in the 9th or 10th century A.D.

Dr. Fleet differs from Gardener and Cunningham that the year 78 in the Taxila record does not fall in the era established by

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[1] J.R.A.S., 1903, p.15.

[2] ibid., pp.16-17.

Maues. Dr. Fleet thinks that even if the text of the record was not itself clear enough, there are various other records which render this supposition impossible, and independently go to establish that it does not suit the 78th year of the era established by Maues, and that it could belong to a civilization which used the date of the month Ponemos of the year 78 in the reign of Maues.

The most reasonable and accepted view on the subject was given by Rapson in the year 1922.[1] Rapson is of the view that the era used in Taxila record is of a Parthian origin and marks the establishment of the new kingdom in Seistan after its incorporation in the Parthian empire by Mithradates I in the year 150 B.C. Tarn[2] differs from Rapson in that, it had a Parthian origin. According to him the era was instituted by the Śakas in the year 155 B.C., when they conquerred one of the richest and safest districts in the empire of Mithradates. Marshal[3] also subscribes to this view.

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1. C.H.I., Vol.I, p.570.
2. G.B.I., p.500.
3. Taxila, Vol.I., p.45.

This view of Tarn, however, faces certain chronological difficulties, as we know that another inscription, giving a similar type of dating has been discovered in a well at Maira, near Taxila. This inscription is dated in the year 58. If we accept Tarn's view that the beginning of the era in question was in the year 155 B.C. then the date of the Maira inscription would be 155-58 i.e. 97 B.C. This would mean that the Śakas were in Punjab as early as 97 B.C., or perhaps even earlier than 97 B.C., whereas Tarn himself fixes the probable date of the arrival of the Śakas in the Punjab in 77 B.C.[1] Thus, if we read the two views expressed by Tarn, firstly with regard to the starting of the Śaka era, and the other with regard to the date of Śakas' arrival in Punjab, it becomes very difficult to reconcile them.

After studying the various views expressed by prominent scholars, one is tempted to fall in a line with the conclusion reached by De-Leeuw[2]

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1. G.B.I., p.321, 323.
2. The Scythian Period, p.326-

that the Taxila record is dated in the 78th year of an era started to commemorate the Śaka reign in Parthia, in the year 129 B.C. If we accept this view it would mean that the Maira inscription will fall in the year 129-58 i.e. 77 B.C. and that of the Taxila record in the year 129-78 i.e. 51 B.C. This view thus sounds more reasonable and might stand all tests.

Saka Era foreign

In spite of all the controversy, one thing is very clear that the era in question was not of Indian origin as the name of the month in the record is Parthian. The possibility is that the early Śakas brought with them an era which they used till they were absorbed by the Indian Society. May-be that it was the famous Arsacid era, or a later Parthian era established around 129 B.C.

We shall now examine the date that occur in an inscription discovered by Sir John Marshal at Kalwan, three miles south east of Sirkap in Taxila under the foundation of a stupa. The inscription is in Kharoshti and is

inscribed on a copper plate with punched dots in the manner of Taxila silver record. The date on the inscription has been expressed thus :

Line I : 'Saṁvatsare 1.100.20.10.4. ajasa
Śrāvanasa māsasa divase trevise
20.1.1.1. imena kṣuṇena ...'

The date in this inscription may well be compared with the date in the silver scrol inscription discovered from Taxila which runs thus :

Line 2 : Saṁ.1.100.20.10.4.1.1. ayasa Asadasa
māsasa divase 10.4.1. isa divase ....[1]

The words 'ajasa' and 'ayasa' occurring in these inscriptions in the same context has led the scholars to believe that they connote the two different forms of the word 'Azes', and it has been inferred that they refer to an era founded by Azes.[2] Professor H.K. Deb has, however, differed from this view and has tried to link the words 'aja' and 'Aya' with the Sanskrit word 'ādya' and concludes that this only means 'of the ādya month' or the first half of the lunar month.[3] The fact that the

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[1] H.K.Deb, I.H.Q., IX, 1933, pp.141.

[2] Marshal, J.H., J.R.A.S., 1914, p.976; Sten Konow, J.R.A.S., 1932, p.953; Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, p.53.

[3] I.H.Q., IX, 1933, p.142-143.

name Azes is always written as 'Aya' and never as 'Aja' on the coins of Azes, lends further support to the view expressed by Deb who makes the following observations to substantiate his view :

'..... We are obliged to formulate an explanation for 'ayasa' and 'Ajasa' as corresponding to some word qualifying 'māsasa', coming immediately afterwards in two records. The māsa is always in these epigraphs a lunar month. We know that the lunar month has two varieties, from a new moon to next new moon, or from a full moon to next full moon. Both varieties are known to early Hindu astronomy, the former being designated amānta and the latter pūrṇimānta. They are also sometimes called *mukhya* and *gauṇa* respectively. Now, the term *mukhya* is synonymous with *ādya*, being derived from *mukh*, which has the same meaning as *ādi*. It is, therefore, quite reasonable to explain *ajasa māsasa* or *ayasa māsasa* as Sanskrit *ādyasya māsasya*, 'of the *ādya* month', in other words, 'of the amānta month' Śravana

in one case and Āṣāḍha in the other.[1]

Prof. Konow thinks that *aja* or *avasa* are two varieties of the proper name Azes. The words Saṃvatsare 136 *avasa* therefore would mean *avasya* saṃvatsare 136 or in the year 136 of Azes. In other words it may be stated that these words can mean 'in the year 136 of an era founded by Azes.' Prof. Banerjee[2] has also explained, giving suitable examples, that the words Samvatsare 136 *avasa* can mean only 'in the year 136 (of the era founded by Azes)'. According to Prof. Banerjee the position of the word Mogasa, with titles, in the Taxila copper plate inscription is clearly indicative of the fact that the word *avasa* or *ajasa* can only be an adjunct of the date. To illustrate his point Prof. Banerjee has referred to Manikwara inscription of the time of Kumāragupta I and the Eran Pillar inscription of Budhagupta. He has explained the lack of titles with the word *avasa* and *ajasa* due to the reason that since the dynasty of Azes had

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[1] ibid., p.143.

[2] *J.R.A.S.*, 1920, p.216, et.seq.

ceased to rule in the year 136 of the era, the inscriber did not care to use the royal titles of Azes, whereas Liaka Kusulaka was a provincial governor under the successors of Maues and it was therefore imperative for him to use the titles while recording the date. Dr. Banerjee has also explained the suggestion of Dr. Fleet[1] that *ayasa* means '*asya*', by saying that the word *ayasa* to mean '*etad*' or '*idam*' has not been used in any record with a date. Wherever, '*etad*' or '*idam*' have been used, for example *etaye pūrvaye* or *etasya pūrvasya* etc. The phrase comes after the entire date i.e. after the year, month and day. With these arguments Prof. Banerjee has arrived at a conclusion that before the advent of Kushāṇas atleast two different eras were used and he has further expressed that any attempt to refer all dates of the Scythian period, i.e. the period from the fall of the Indo-Greeks to the rise of the Kushāṇa empire, to any single era must necessarily be invalid.

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[1] J.R.A.S., 1915, p.317.

Whereas we cannot rule out the possibilities of the use of more than one era during the period under review, we must examine the difficulties in sustaining such a view. If we agree to the view that the era used in the year 134, 136 was founded by Azes, we cannot explain the reason why it could not survive to the present day, whereas other eras established during the same period have survived. Secondly, as has been suggested by Prof. Banerjee, the inscriptions bearing 134, 136 dates, were recorded after Azes had ceased to rule in that area and perhaps after Kushāṇas. If the era could survive and was used during the Kushāṇa period, with perhaps another era, founded by Maues, there should be no reason why it was not continued after the Kushāṇas to the modern times.

One thing is, however, very evident from the Kalawan copper plate inscription and silver inscription at Taxila that the era to which the date of these inscriptions belong was founded 134 and 136 years before the date of the record. The record refers to a Kushāṇa

'Great King of Kings' and if we identify him with Kaniṣka who is known to have come to power by 78 A.D., we can reach the conclusion that the inscriptions in question are dated in the era founded in the year 136-78 = 58 B.C. It is, therefore, more probable that this record is dated in an era founded in the year 58 B.C. This assumption will automatically eliminate suggestions that the words *ajasa* and *ayasa* occurring in the inscriptions mean 'in the year of Azes', and the only explanation possible for these words would be that they stand for the Sanskrit words *adyasya*, meaning 'of the first'.

If we accept that the era of these records was established round about 58 B.C., and there appears no reason not to accept this view, we may infer that the record was dated in the Malava or Vikrama era. Thus, during the period of the early Śakas at least two eras were known and in use, one brought and used by the early Śakas and the other established in 58 B.C.

There is a controversy about the establishment of the Śaka era. There is a view that this era was not started in Malava, but by a king of northern India with his Capital at Mathura whose dominions must have included Malava, and it was preserved and handed over to posterity by the people of that area.[1] Following this suggestion, it has been asserted that Kuṣ~~h~~āṇa king Kaniṣ~~h~~ka fits in the scheme very well, and thus, the great Kuṣ~~h~~āṇa king is attributed with establishment of this era,[2] notwithstanding the fact that the year 58 B.C. is too early a year for Kaniṣ~~h~~ka.

The usual belief is that the era of 58 B.C. was founded by Vikramāditya, son of Mahendraditya, ruler of Malwa to mark the emancipation of Malwa from the Śaka domination. But since we know that Śakas continued to rule over Malwa and areas adjoining it for many centuries after 58 B.C., there appears no reason to believe that the area was emancipated from

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1. Fleet, J.F., J.R.A.S., 1907, pp.169-171.
2. ibid.

Śaka domination around 58 B.C. The near possibility is that this era was started by an Indian ruler who headed the forces which defeated and ousted temperarily the Śakas from Ujjain around 58 or 57 B.C.[1] This era naturally became a popular reckoning of the time as it commemorated a natural victory over an invader. The era could also have been accepted by the defeated people as a date to remember so that the younger generation might not forget a defeat to be avenged. An example of this kind can be found in the Mohammadan era Hijira, which was started to commemorate the year when the prophet was humiliated and forced to abandon Mecca.

Apart from the era of 58 B.C., another era was also in use during the initial centuries of the Christian era; as we know that the Śaka rulers of Malwa dated their coins and inscriptions in an era which was not the era of 58 B.C. the origin of which is sometimes assigned to them. Some scholars are of opinion that the well known Śaka-Śalivahana era, which is even now in vogue in some parts of India, is the same

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[1] De Leeuw, The Scythian Period, p.332.

era.[1] It is believed that the Śaka era of 78 A.D. was established by the Kuṣhāṇa ruler Vima Kadphises who reconquer~~r~~ed his lost dominions in India by ousting the dynasty of Vikramaditya from Ujjain and appointed his governor to rule Malwa and Saurashtra.[2] However, the generally accepted view is that the era in question was established by the Kuṣhāṇa emperor Kaniṣhka, who is generally accepted to have started his rule from 78 A.D.

Thus the origin of this era is as mysterious and controversial as that of the era of 58 B.C. A legend is current that Śālivāhana, son of a virgin ~~from~~ by a sepent, killed Vikramāditya of Ujjain and to commemorate the victory he instituted an era.[3] In the Somalapuram grant of Virūpākṣa of Śaka 1389, this era is described as 'Śālivāhana-nirmita-Śaka-Varṣa-Karmagate,[4] meaning thereby that Śālivāhana was directly responsible for the

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1. Chattopadhyaya, Dr. S., Sakas in India, p.35.
2. Shastri, K.A.Nilakantha, J.R.A.S., 1926, p.661.
3. Bhandarkar, D.R., I.A., 1918, p.70.
4. E.I., Vol.XVII, p.199.

determination of the course of the Śaka years.[1] The era is used in inscriptions and literature in a variety of ways sometimes as that of the coronation of a Śaka king, ~~or of a Saka king~~; or that it marks the expiry of the time of the Śaka king or kings.[2]

The multiple nomenclature and variety of context in which it has been used in ancient times, naturally led people to confuse the era of 58 B.C. with that of 78 A.D., even during the mediaeval period of Indian history. According to Abul Fazl, 'After the invasion of Salvahana, the era of Bikramajit was changed from Saka to Sanpat'.[3] The words Śaka and Saṁvat are occassionally used for perhaps the same era by Sanskrit writers also.

We may sum up that the Śakas used more than one era and that :

a) the early Śakas used an era which had a Parthian origin. Since they entered India through lands, where the use of two of the

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[1] Chattopadhyaya, Dr. S., Sakas in India, p.39.

[2] ibid., pp.38-39.

[3] Ain-i-Akbari, p.16.

earliest eras in the history of the world— the Seleucid of 312 B.C. and the Arsacid (Parthian) of 248 B.C., must have been quite familiar.[1] They might have preferred to use one of these eras or could have started their own era using the Parthian month names.

b) Another era was established in the year 58 B.C. to commemorate a conflict between the Indians and ~~the~~ foreigners. The foreigners quite necessarily have been the Śakas who invaded Malwa and were held by the legendary Indian prince Vikramāditya. The fact that for the first five hundred years of the era are simply referred to as Saṁvat,[2] suggests that it might have been established at the end of a conflict in which both sides claimed victories, and there is a possibility that the year was commemorated by both the sides; and at a later stage, it came to be known as the era of the Malwas and the Vikrama era to distinguish it clearly from the era of 78 A.D.

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[1] Sircar, D.C., A.I.U., p.125, f.n.1

[2] ~~Sircar, D.C., A.I.U.~~, p.236.
Ibid.

c) A third era in use was that of 78 A.D. which, though believed to have been established by Kaniṣka, was used by the Śakas in their writings and came to be known as the Śaka era, the Śaka-Kāla, Śaka-Nṛpa-Kāla or the Śaka-Nṛpa-rājyābhiṣeka-Kāla. A possibility is that while Kaniṣka settled in the north, the Śakas, with the help of their Kuṣāṇa overlord, settled finally in Malwa, and the era was started to commemorate both the occasions, ultimately passing on to posterity as one founded by the Śakas alone.

The above discussion, though fairly extensive, does not rule out finally all the other conclusions and is by no means final.

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CHAPTER IX

Administration and Coinage

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We learn from the epigraphic and numismatic evidence that the Śakas acquired a large territory in north western India. It appears that in their initial struggle they conquered Gandhāra, Taxila and Puṣhkalāwatī and separated the Yavanas of eastern Punjab from those of the Paropamisadae.[1] These territories were further expanded by the successors of Maues, and before the beginning of the Christian era they had overcome, one by one, all the Greek states to the south of Hindukush including the kingdom of Arachosia (south-west Afghanistan), the Paropamisadae (south-east Afghanistan), Taxila in the west Punjab and Śakala (modern Sialkot in Pakistan).[2] The Mathura Lion Capital inscription makes it clear that their territories extended as far east as Mathura.[3] To govern these vast territories it

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1. Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, pp.46-47; Rapson, C.H.I., Vol.I, pp.570-571; Tarn, G.B.I., p.323.
2. Marshal, ibid., p.55.
3. ibid.

naturally required a better administration compared to what they had needed to administer their tribal set up. The Śakas rose upto the occasion and did their best to pick up ideas from the people they conquered and established a system of administration which not only gave a political stability to the conquered dominions, but also led to the diffusion of the cultural ideas, art and architecture, religion, etc. From the numismatic evidence it is clear that they took full advantage of the Greek system of administration, even to the extent of employing the same nomenclature for their officials.[1]

From their coins it appears that they had a feudal system of government with Taxila as their centre. A "Great King of Kings" had his imperial seat at Taxila from where he exercised his authority over his provinces governed by Satraps and Great Satraps.

Connecting together different types of evidence available from the coins, we

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[1] Tarn, G.B.I., pp.242-243; Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, pp.55-56.

come across two patterns of Śaka administration. The countries to the west and east of the Indus were ruled by the members of the same royal house.[1] However, it seems that the territories west of the river Indus were ruled by a 'King of Kings' in association with a junior member of his family whereas, that east of the river by the 'King of Kings'[2] himself. It is assumed that it was the usual practice that the subordinate ruler in Iran succeeded as a 'King of Kings' in India.[3] This would mean that the junior member of the royal house was associated in administration as an apprentice in Iran so that he was matured enough to discharge independent duties of a 'King of Kings' in the far stretched dominions in India.

The scheme enumerated above has a few difficulties to answer. When we assume that a junior member, associated in administration in Iran succeeded as a 'King of Kings' in Indian territories, it follows that the

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1. C.H.I., Vol.I, p.568.
2. ibid.
3. ibid.

the 'King of Kings in India', should succeed as the 'Great King of Kings' or the suzerain in Iran. But we have not come across any evidence to indicate that any 'King of Kings' in India ever succeeded as a suzerain in Iran. Therefore I would suggest that this incident of administration was not a regular practice. It may have been tried only for a little period and ultimately the 'King of Kings' in India assumed soveriegnty over the Indian territories.

In India they followed the Indo-Greek pattern of administration. The 'King of Kings' ruled as the supreme head of administration in which he associated his heir-apparent. This practice perhaps was followed to associate the successor in the administration during the life time of the father so that he picked up the details of administration. He was also respected by the noblemen and the satraps as their junior king and the future 'Great King of Kings'. The pattern was necessary in those turbulant times so that the rulers were assured of a peaceful succession and that there

was no disturbance when they disappeared from the scene.

For an effective control of the vast territories which they acquired in India, the Śakas divided them into provinces which they named Satrapys.[1] These provinces were placed in charge of a governor usually called a Ksatrapa or a Mahākṣatrapa. The term Kṣatrapa was perhaps introduced into India by the Śakas and was brought in from Parthia. Such a term is not found in Sanskrit literature. May-be the term is the Sanskrit form of the old Persian Khshtrapavan which means basically a chief of the military order. The title was generally applied to warrior chiefs who were recruited by their sovereign or overlord to rule over certain portions of the territory. The term continued to be used even after the governor had become sufficiently powerful to assert his own independence.

With the scanty information at our disposal we are not able to find the exact number of such provinces or satrapys. We are,

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1. Chatopadhyaya, S., p.23; Hist.Ind., Vol.II, pp.218-219.

however, not so uncertain about the Satrapys of Mathura and Chukhṣa. The earliest record about these provinces and their rulers is that of Liaka Kusulaka, the Satrap of Chhahara and Chukhṣa, in the Taxila copper plate inscription of the year 78.[1] The exact identification of these districts is not possible but, presumably, they were in the neighbourhood of Taxila. Marshal identified Chukhṣa with modern Chach, a broad alluvial plain in the north of the Attock district along the Indus. He is of the opinion that the satrapy must have been very much larger than the present Chach, and probably it lay along both banks of the river comprising at least the Peshawar valley on its west and most of the Hazara, Attock and Mianwali districts on its east. Marshal thinks it very likely that this satrapy corresponded roughly with the old Greek sub-kingdom ruled by Antimachus II, Polyxenus, Epander, etc.[2] The Satraps of this territory were powerful chiefs whose main duty was perhaps to guard the

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1. Rapson, *C.H.I.*, Vol.I, p.575; Marshal, *Taxila*, Vol.I, p.47.
2. Marshal, ibid., pp.47-48.

northern frontiers and the fords of the Indus besides the day to day administration of the territory placed under them.

The other important satrapy was Mathura which comprised of eastern territories of the Śakas. The first name of the ruler of this province, Rājula or Rājubula, comes to us from a Kharoshthi inscription on the Mathura Lion Capital. His coins have been found over a wide area between the Indus and the Jamuna rivers,[1] and from the find spots of his coins in east Punjab, Marshal is inclined to think that his original satrapy was in the eastern Punjab.[2] From the coins found at Taxila, Marshal infers, that at least at some time Taxila was also included in the satrapy of Rājubula.[3] It was only after the conquest of the Greek kingdom of the eastern Punjab under Azes I that a new satrapy was created under Rājubula to administer the newly won territories and to

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1. B.M.C., p.cxv.
2. Taxila, Vol.I, p.54.
3. ibid.

guard the south eastern frontiers against the ever-growing power of the Āndhras who ultimately trounced them. Later on this satrapy seems to have been enlarged by adding Taxila[1] in the north and Mathura in the south-east, which afterwards developed as the headquarters of the satrapal family.

The satrapy of Kapiśa, which is identified with modern Kafiristan, apparently unknown from any other source, is mentioned in the inscription on the Manikyala cylinder.[2] Since the details about this satrapy are not readily available, we may, on the basis of this inscription conclude that the satrap who was the son of Graṇavhryaka ruled the territory of Kafiristan and the valleys of Ghorband and Panjsir on behalf of his Śaka overlords.[3]

We may also refer to the satrapy of Abhisāraprastha where a satrap, Śivasena by name, was ruling. There is another reference to a satrap named Śivarakshiyta. These satraps

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1. ibid.
2. Dowson, J.R.A.S., 1863, p.244, pl.IV, 4- quoted from Rapson, Cat. of Indian Coins, p.ci.
3. J.A.S.B., 1924, p.14; J.R.A.S., 1863, p.244; Corpus, pp.150-151.

have been mentioned in the legend of the copper seal ring found in the Punjab. Dr. Chattopodya is of the view that since the names of Śivasena and Śivrakṣita are Indianised, they may be of the same house i.e. the house of Abhisāraprastha.[1] Their relationship with their Śaka overlords is not clearly known. May be they were Indian cheiftains appointed as Ksatrapas by the Śakas.

From some of the inscriptions we learn that in addition to the satrapal provinces there was another rank called 'Strategos'. Literally the word 'Strategos' means a military commander and can be called the equivalent of the Indian Senāpati.[2] The titles 'Strategos' is of the Greek origin and was possibly given to military governors. Perhaps they were required to govern either a newly conquered territory or some troubled area in the Śaka empire with the help of the army under their command.

The satraps or governors were apparently hereditary and just on the pattern of

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[1] J.A.S.B., 1924, p.14; Chattopadhyaya, p.23.

[2] Rapson, C.H.I., p.577.

their overlords, the Śaka kings, they followed the custom of associating their successors in administration during their life time. The senior member, father in most cases, was entitled "Mahākṣatrapa" whereas the heir or the junior member had the simple title of 'Satrap' or 'Kṣatrapa'.

These Śaka governors enjoyed a good deal of autonomy in their administration so much so that they issued their own coins in their respective territories. These coins bear the name of the governor and his successor and there is no mention of their overlords. This phenomenon suggests rather clearly that their allegiance to their overlord was limited to a mutually agreed alliance necessitated to safeguard their interests and their existence in a new and perhaps an alien land; and there are instances, when these satraps grew so powerful, that they dispensed with the aforesaid limited alliance also.

Except for some stray references, details of local administration could not survive

time. The copper plate inscription at Taxila mentions the rank of Meridorkh. Like Strategos the term 'Meridorkh' was also Greek in origin. It appears that like the Greeks the Śakas too governed districts and other smaller units of administration with the help of as smaller officials as Meridorkhs.

The mention of one Viśpila who was the *ananikāva* of Vijatamitra further confirms the belief that there were many more ranks of officials who were entrusted to the care of various stages of administration. The Greek form of *ananikava* is *anarkaios* which means royal advisor and which might have been an honorific title.[1]

There is no mention of details of administration beyond the Meridorkh level. However, we can assume that the lowest unit of administration was ~~a~~ the village, though towns like Taxila and Mathura had long developed into provincial headquarters. From the absence of any reference to the Indian villages at the time we may infer that Śakas left them to their traditional autonomous isolation without interfering

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[1] *N.I.A.*, 1940, p.646; Ghoshal, *History of India*, Vol.II, pp.218-219.

much in their day-to-day routine.

From the titles and coins of the Śakas in north-west India we learn that they copied Greek systems at all stages. However, the Indianization of the Śakas at a fast speed makes us believe that the Greek influence was only shortlived and the superior absorbing power of the Indian society ultimately prevailed not only on the Śakas, but also on other communities like the Greek. The name Aspavarman, a "strategos" in the north-western India during the Śaka rule, indicates that either the Śakas started recruiting Indians in their services or they had taken to Indian names. The later Śakas, particularly the Western Satraps, definitely adopted Indian titles such as 'Rājan' 'Swāmi', 'Bhadramukh' and the like. In administration also they started using Indian titles for their officials such as 'Āmātyas' and 'Sachivas'. From the Girnar inscriptions we learn that there were 'Mati-sachivas'(Councillors) and "Karma-sachivas" (executive officers).[1]

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[1] Ghoshal, *History of India*, Vol.II, p.348.

All this clearly indicates that instead of influencing the local society, the Śakas became part and parcel of it and their administration gradually fused itself into the local pattern. By doing so it was but natural that they should carry the society of the land of their adoption with them and thereby succeed in gaining their confidence in establishing a stable political order which resulted in the development of the economy and prosperity of the land.

Coinage and Currency

A very large number of Śaka coins have come to light spread over a vast area indicating thereby their large dominions, stability of political order and a growing economy. We shall take note of the economy and the guild activities, which facilitated banking, in the following chapter. The Śaka coinage mostly is a continuation of the Indo-Greek currency. It is therefore evident that they took over the Greek mints, made note of the Greek moneyers and engravers, and issued a similar kind of bilingual coinage with Greek

legends on the obverse and the Kharoshthi ones on the reverse.[1] The most noteworthy of these coins are the coins of Maues which are imitations of some of the familiar types of Appollodotus and Menander in the eastern Punjab.[2]

Like the coinage of the Greeks, rich in variety, the coinage of the Śakas too, though an imitation of the Greek models, evidences a great multiplicity of types.[3] This can be guessed from the fact that among the 107 coins of Maues found in the Taxila excavation, there were no less than 15 different types. Likewise among the 1291 coins of Azes I there were 18 types and among the 11 coins of Azilasis no less than nine.[4] On the basis of the marks on the coins Marshal is inclined to divide those of Maues alone into 3 groups.[5] In the first are "the types designated α, γ, δ, λ, υ, ο, π

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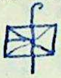
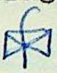
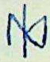
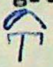
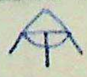
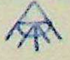
[1] Marshal, *Taxila*, Vol.I, p.56, also Vol.II, p.833; Rapson, *C.H.I.*, Vol.I, p.567; Tarn, *G.B.I.*, p.333.

[2] Rapson, *C.H.I.*, Vol.I, p.571.

[3] Tarn, *G.B.I.*, p.333.

[4] Marshal, *Taxila*, Vol.II, p.771.

[5] ibid., p.778.

and δ and illustrated in pl. X, nos 1, 3, 5, 10, 27, 31, 32 and 35 of the P.M. Cat; to which must be added also the following types: 'Heracles and lion' (BM. Cat., pl.XVI, no.5), poseidon with aplustri vine goddess'(ibid., pl.XVII, no.2) 'Elephant and bull'(ibid., pl.XVII, no.6) 'standing figure with ankus and aegis.' (Cunningham, pl.II,13). This group of coins is distinguished by the moneyer's marks,  or ,  and . The second group comprises the types, PM Cat. Σ, 3, h and i (pl.X, nos. 13, 15, 16 and 20), to which must be added the king in biga and Zeus enthroned type of Cunningham, pl.II, nos.1-3. This group is distinguished by the moneyer's marks  and . The third group comprises the types 'Male deity with club and goddess' (PM.Cat.pl.X, no.25 and BM. Cat. pl.XVII, 3); mounted king and goddess with lamp (BM.Cat.pl.XVI, No.3; Cunningham, pl.II, no.7); and Mounted King and Pallas' (BM.Cat.pl.XVI, no.6; Cunningham, pl.II, no.10). The moneyers marks used with these types of the third group are  or  with Ψι ".[1]

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[1] Marshal, Taxila, Vol.II, p.778.

The large variety and types of Maues' coins is perhaps due to the fact that he overthrew a number of Greek houses and, since each of the Greek principalities, possibly had their own coins, Maues started copying all or as many of them as was possible and necessary. According to Marshal the first and perhaps the major group of coins were minted at Taxila which was the capital of the Śaka empire, and possessed naturally the chief mint. The second group of the coins of Maues contained marks which are found on the money of Telephus who preceded Maues at Kāpiśī. Marshal, therefore, thinks that the second group of coins of Maues was cast at the Kāpiśī mint. Some of the coins of the first and second groups have common marks and Marshal is of the view that this could be due to the reason that some of the engravers from Kāpiśī might have been transferred to Taxila or vice-versa, and that such of the transferred engravers were responsible for common markings on some of the coins minted at two different mints. The third

and the smallest group of coins of Maues are characterised by their rough and crude workmanship and clumsily written Kharoshthi legends. From the types of coins and the craftmanship, Marshal attributes these coins to the Arachosian mint.[1]

The moneyer's marks which help us to group the coins of Maues into 3 categories do not give us the same help to group the coins of Azes I, because out of the 32 types of his coins described in the Punjab Museum Catalogue, 23 have a similar mark. We can presume that most of the coins of Azes were struck at one mint, possibly at Taxila. However, this is not a safe inference as some of the coins in the group are different in style from the coins minted at Taxila. Marshal is of the view that either provincial mint in Arakhosia was closed and the engravers employed there were brought to Taxila, or, perhaps, all the imperial mints were placed under a unified control and the

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[1] Ibid., pp.778-779.

controller of the new arrangement had his marks stamped on all the issues of the currency, irrespective of their place of origin.[1]

A progressive deterioration in the design and workmanship is clearly noticeable during the reign of Azes II. The decline may have been slow and gradual during the reign of Azes I and Azilisis perhaps because of the availability of some of the Greek moneyers. As compared to this the decline during the reign of Azes II was rather sharp and sudden. This phenomenon could be due to the reason that the earlier Śakas continued to employ not only the old engravers and workmen but also the same designs. Under Azes II this continuity was abruptly broken. Thus his coins, though similar in design, suffer from lack of art in style and workmanship. So poor is the quality of these coins that the British Museum Catalogue describes them as barbarous impressions.

State Museum Library Lucknow

Marshal has found some issues of coins belonging to ancient period in the Saka-Parthian stratum at Taxila and he has concluded

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[1] ibid., pp.779-781.

that 'ancient Indian coins remained in circulation for generations after their authors had passed away'. These coins include old Punch marked coins, Taxilan, Greek and early Śaka issues, as well as the later Śaka-Parthian and Kuṣhāṇa coins. This phenamenon appears to be strange but looking to the deterioration in workmanship, style and fabric of the later Śaka coins during the rule of Azes II, it is possible that the old currency remained in circulation, perhaps, because of their fine craftsmanship and richer fabric. May be that the bullion value of these ancient coins remained at par with the currency in vogue due to the richness of their fabric.

An interesting find in the excavations at Taxila, in one of the chambers adjacent to the main street, consists of a number of moulds used for casting coins. These moulds are circular flat plates, 4" in diameter and contain impressions of 6 to 12 coins. They bear impressions of the coins of Maues, Azilises and

Azes II.[1] Assigning 60 A.D. as the date of these moulds, Marshal asserts, that they were part of the outfit used by forgers to counterfeit coins of these kings, who had ceased to rule long before. His main argument is that the forgers found it safer to copy these older issues of the Śaka rulers, rather than to forge the then current coins. Though the argument seems very convincing, it has to be weighed against serious objections. The basic question can be, Was forgery possible at all in that age when the token currency of the modern times was unknown? When the value of the currency is equivalent to the value of the metal used, what could the forgers gain by minting unauthorised coins? They could have easily sold the metal at the same cost and save their labour in minting the coins and also avoid the risk involved in such a forgery. It is therefore necessary to accept the view of Marshal with a little reservation. There cannot, however, be two opinions relating to the naked fact of deterioration in style and finish of some

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1. Marshal, Taxila, Vol.I, pp.177-178; also Vol.II, pp.833-34.

of the Śaka coins of later dates.

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CHAPTER X

Economy And Corporate Life

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It has been pointed out in earlier pages that during their trek to India Śakas came in contact with Indo-Parthian and Indo-Hellenic civilizations. Though this contact was apparently a political phase, it resulted in an intermingling of civilizations and also brought India in touch with their western neighbours so far as trade and commerce is concerned. Moreover, the Śakas, while coming in contact with these civilizations in course of their travels to India, absorbed and assimilated ideas of the people they conquered. They brought these ideas to the land where they ultimately settled after a long period of struggle and turmoil. As a direct result of their broad-mindedness and their willingness to adopt the ideas of people they came in contact with, they became instrumental in bringing the Indo-Parthian and the Indo-Hellenistic cultures together. When they had ultimately settled in India they further concentrated on their new

finds in culture and the result was the widening of the scope of intellectual activities and breaking up of traditionalism.[1]

We know that after the fall of the Śunga dynasty in India, the country, particularly north-western India, was divided into smaller principalities ruled by autonomous or independent chieftains. It was natural then that trade and commerce of the country should suffer a set back. For a considerable period, the Indus and Gangetic valleys had to face foreign invasions. Apparently Śakas conquered smaller and weaker principalities and established a large kingdom covering the whole of north-western India as far east as Mathura. This stability in political life naturally resulted in a steady growth of the economic life of the country.

A direct and natural outcome of the Śaka occupation of northern India was the linking of the country with Parthia and Central Asia by land routes. The Śakas followed

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1. Chatopadhayaya, Dr.S., Śakas in India, p.80.

a route from Central Asia to India, which was apparently not being used as a trade route mostly because of unstable political conditions. When the territories on the east and west of the Indus came under a single political control this difficulty was naturally overcome and resulted in increased cultural, social and economic contacts of the people living on either side of the Indus. The existence of Indian influence in Kashgar during this period has been established by the discoveries of Sir A. Stein at Niya and at Leou-lan, where several Prakrit inscriptions in Kharoshti characters were discovered besides several Indian texts. A chain of Indian settlements between the Oxus valley and Tun-huang in Kan-su of the north-west of China, all along the route of the Tarim river and the silk route, was formed. These settlements proved the stages of the Indian Pundits proceeding to China to propagate Buddhism and for the Chinese pilgrims seeking religious treasures in India for the benefit of their neo-initiate. We can safely infer that these

colonies formed a link in the trade relationship also between India and China.[1] Dr. Chattopadhyaya is of the opinion that Śakas controlled all important trade routes in northern India. From the absence of any account of the trade connection between southern and northérn India, Dr. Chattopadhyaya infers that under the Śakas the only trade that India had was with the western world and there was no, or very little, trade between north and south India.[2] The *Periplus* and the works[3] of Pliny and Ptolemy also testify to a flourishing trade between India and the western world, particularly during the age of the later Śakas and Kuṣaṇas. If we rely on these classical works, we can also arrive at the conclusion that during the Śaka rule India renewed maritime activities which led to her contacts with the far-east. With the spread of Śakas to the central India and the western coast a number of ports were built and sea trade became a common occupation of the land.

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1. ibid., pp.80-81.
2. ibid.
3. *Natural History*; *Geography*.

A reference to a duty (शुल्क) in the Girnār inscription of Rudradaman makes us further believe that it gave a considerable regular revenue to the state exchequer.[1] From the Nasik inscription no. 12 we learn about an investment of 2,000 Kārṣāpaṇas by Ṛṣabhadatta, son-in-law of Nahapāṇa with the "western weavers' guild at an interest rate of 1 % per month on the condition that the principal will remain fixed, and the interest alone will be paid".[2] This can be taken as a type of banking which was prevalent in India at that time, and which the Śakas allowed to continue. The investment mentioned above can be a kind of fixed deposit and may point to a stable banking economy. But before we proceed to refer to this aspect of our study it will be well to look back in retrospect the corporate development of the Indian economic complex.

India seems to have developed a net-work of corporate life covering practically all the spheres of human activity.[3] Corporate

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1. ibid., p.82.
2. ibid.
3. A concentrated study of the subject has been made by Dr. R.K. Mookerji in his Local Government in ancient India and by Dr. R.C. Majumdar in his Corporate life in ancient India.

living creates an environment favouring the development of social institutions. Group life as a force in self defence was discovered and lived by the savage brute as early as the pre-historic times. Soon man developed experience and ideas and collective living became an organised social phenomenon resulting in religious, social, political, and economic institutions. In ancient India organisations grew in all these spheres on what may be regarded as a democratic or popular basis to fulfil the ends of national life.[1] As a result of limited interference by the state both state and society developed independent organisms with distinct and well defined structures, functions and laws of their own. This absence of interdependence was responsible for a free development of the social order and of social and economic institutions. The existence of an autonomous social order, more or less independent of the control of the ruling powers and unaffected by the vicissitudes of

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[1] Mookerji, ibid., p.1.

the latter's fortune, helped to build up an economic structure in India, seldom found elsewhere, despite unrest and unsettled conditions. Such social development would naturally call for an independent and simultaneous economic growth.[1]

The first evidence of the corporate activity in economic sphere comes from the later vedic period. The word śreṣṭhi and its variants like śreṣṭhin and śraiṣṭhya, clearly convey the sense of the headman of a guild, and also of the prominent position that he enjoyed in his guild. The guilds had already developed into a familiar and well-established institution.[2]

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1. Cf. Birdwood, George, Industrial Arts of India, p.320.
2. For details see Mookerji, R.K., Local Government in ancient India, pp.42-43. He is inclined to suggest (in f.n.1.,p.42) that it is possible that the word śreṣṭhin may already have assumed the sense of the headman of a guild, the modern seth. There is a similar doubt in the use of śraiṣṭhya which is perhaps not merely 'the foremost place' as usually assumed, but definitely 'the presidency of a guild'. Cf. Macdonell and Keith, Vedic Index Vol.II, pp.403-4.

The corporate activity further developed and became part and parcel of the economy of the period. Workers in like professions usually formed themselves into a corporation with definite rules to guide them.[1] The term, Śreṇī, though explained differently by various contemporary authorities, generally denotes a corporation of tradesmen or mechanics, a body of workers belonging to the same or different castes but following the same trade or industry.[2] Though practically all the important branches of industry had formed themselves into guilds, the conventional number of types of corporations was set down as eighteen.[3] It may not be possible to determine precisely the nature of these eighteen guilds, but we may be sure that these hardly exhausted the number which

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1. Majumdar, *R.C. Corporate life in Ancient* India p.16.
2. ibid., p.17.
3. ~~Majumdar, R.C.~~, ibid., pp.17-18.

were considerably large.[1]

The conventional number of guilds continued to remain eighteen during the Jātaka stories came to be developed.[2] One remarkable development during this period was hereditary specialisation, followed by localisation of crafts. The son was apprenticed to the craft of his father from his very early age, and thus the skill and talent of a particular craft or industry was passed on from father to son for generations that followed.

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[1] ibid., pp.18-19. The guilds listed were of the workers in wood (carpenters, including cabinet-makers, wheel-wrights, builders of houses, ships and vehicles of all sorts); workers in metal, including gold and silver; workers in stone; leather workers; ivory workers; workers fabricating hydraulic engines (odayaṁtrikā); bamboo workers (vaśakāra); braziers (kaśākāra); jewellers; weavers; potters; oilmillers (tilapiśaka); rush workers and basket makers; dyers; painters; corn-dealers (dhaṁnika); cultivators; fisher folk; butchers; barbers and shampooers; garland makers and flower sellers; mariners; herdsmen; traders, including caravan traders; robbers and freebooters; forest police who guarded the caravans; and money-lenders.

[2] Majumdar, R.C. ibid., p.23. From the days of Buddha till the time the stories were recorded in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Such artisans would prefer to live together and as a result streets and parts of a town, indeed entire villages became inhabited by men plying the same craft.[1] The heads of the guilds came to be known as 'pamukha'(president) and 'jeṭṭhaka (elder, or alderman). In course of time the office of the elder or alderman appears to have become hereditary and acquired prominence and status in the courts. Some heads of the guilds, sometimes held high posts in the state and were favourites of the kings, rich and of great substance.[2] Gradually an office of seṭṭhi later Chetty in south India, in a city (or a nagaraseth), developed, who enjoyed a social as well as political status.[3] His wealth and riches, which, as often in the past as in recent times, made him even the creditor of the king and his nobles, naturally gave him an exalted position. The Jatakas mention

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1. ibid., p.21.
2. ibid., pp.21-22.
3. Mookerji, ibid., p.46.

setthis who, apart from their headship of the guild, acted as ministers of kings. Such a minister, besides holding charge of the treasury of the king, was also appointed to the office of a judge for a number of guilds.[1] Setthi was thus associated in the administration also perhaps representing the mercantile interests.

The period from the 5th century B.C. to the 3rd witnessed further development of the guild organisation. Guilds now come to be entrusted with powers of making laws which included the making of rules to regulate their business as also to express their relationship with the society and with their own members and their relatives.[2]

The importance of the guilds during this period can be ascertained from the fact that the governments of the time had to appoint special ministers to regulate the affairs of the guilds. Taxes paid by these guilds formed one of the most important sources of revenue of

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1. ibid., pp.46-47.
2. Majumdar, ibid., pp.24-25.

the state.[1] Kautilya's Arthaśāstra seems to make them enjoy even military powers. The Mandsaur inscription supports this view by stating that the members of guilds were either required to render military service or they maintained their own army units which were allowed by the state to function in times of emergency.[2]

Thus we see that the economic and social life of the country was well organised through guilds of various types at the time when the Śakas entered India and established themselves at various centres in the country. We are not aware of the contribution of the Śakas in Taxila and Mathura towards the maintenance and development of corporate institutions. Nevertheless we learn from the Dharmaśāstras that the institutions continued to control and the social and economic sphere of life from the 2nd century B.C. to the 4th century A.D. The injunctions given in the

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1. Ibid., p.26.
2. Fleet, C.I.I. The silk-weavers' guild's inscription of the time of Bandhuvarman and Kumaragupta.

literature of the period pointedly suggest that the guild organisation had developed into an important factor in the state polity,[1] so much so that the state guaranteed the existence of these institutions by affording them necessary assistance. The result was a further development of these organisations on the one hand and an increased confidence of the public in their utility on the other. This fact can be fully made out from the following inscriptions of the period :

✓ 1. Number 12 of the Nasik Cave inscriptions dated in the year 42 (assigned to 120 A.D.), quoted earlier, records the donation of 3000 Karṣāpaṇas by Uṣavadāta (Ṛṣabhadāta), son-in-law of the Śaka chief Nahapāṇa. The gift was a perpetual endowment for the benefit of the Buddhist monks "of any sect and any origin dwelling in this cave". The amount was invested in two separate guilds as under:

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[1] Majumdar, pp.33-34.

a) 2000 in a weaving guild at the rate of interest of one percent per month.

b) 1000 in another weaving guild at the rate of interest of 3/4 percent per month.

The first investment of 2000 kārṣāpaṇas at the rate of interest of one percent per month was intended to provide a cloth money of 12 kārṣāpaṇas to each of the 20 monks residing in the cave. The other endowment of 1000 was meant to provide money for 'kuṣāṇa', (a term, not very clear), perhaps pocket money. The idea was to provide for the monks out of the interests of the investment, the principal amount remaining unused.

2. Inscription no.15 of the Nasik series, which is dated in the 9th year of king Īśvarasena, who ruled in the 3rd century A.D., records a similar endowment with the guilds at Govardhana. It says, "To provide medicines for the sick of the Saṅgha of monks, of whatever sect and origin dwelling in this monastery on mount Triraśmi, a perpetual endowment has been

invested for all time to come with the guilds dwelling (at Govardhana), viz, in the hands of the guild of Kularikas (?=Kulala, potter), one thousand-1,000-Kārṣāpaṇas, of the guild of Odayantrikas (?= audayantrika from udayayantra, i.e. workers fabricating hydraulic engines) two thousand, of the guild of ... five hundred-500 of the guild of oilmillers (tilapiśaka)... The object of the endowment was to make a permanent provision for medicines that the ail~~l~~ing monks of the monestery might need.

3. One of the Junnar cave inscriptions records investment of the income of a field at Vadalika for planting karanja trees and another for planting banyan trees by a lay worshipper Aduthuma who is taken to be a Śaka and a member of the guild of the Koṇacikas. Another inscription of the Junnar records mentions an investment of money with the guild of bamboo-workers and the guild of braziers (kaśākāra).

4. Yet another inscription of the Junnar series records a gift of a cave and a

cistern by a guild of corn dealers.[1]

Apart from the specific examples cited above, a number of fragmentary inscriptions discovered from various places all over the country mention the existence and functioning of corporate institutions and guilds of numerous types, working not only as controlling organisations for a specific business, trade or a profession but also serving multiform purposes of the society. Besides performing these normal functions, they provided avenues of investment of various types, acting as banks accepting deposits of a permanent type, allowing a specific amount as interest on the principal, making provisions to pay interest to the beneficiaries of the endowment and keeping the principal amount as a fixed or permanent deposit with them. Such an investment served at least two purposes. The depositor could get regular income from his investment for himself or for the person

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[1] ibid., p.36.

for whom the investment was made, and at the same time, the guild could use the amount for the expansion of its activities. There are examples to indicate that these guilds also lent out their surplus money to people on certain specific terms and conditions. Thus they served the community as modern banks.

Most of the inscriptions mentioned above, besides references in the contemporary literature, suggest a varied pattern of interest that was being charged. The rate of interest ranged from 9 to 12 per cent per annum.[1] There appears no reason for variation in the rate of interest specially when the investment was being made at the same place and at the same time as was the case in the inscription no.12 of the Nasik cave. Since the contemporary literature pointedly suggests that the functioning of these guilds was controlled by rules and bye-laws, the natural inference is that the variation in the rate of interest was also regularised by

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[1] Cf. Majumdar R.C. Corporate life in Ancient India pp.37-38.

appropriate rules and may have depended on the nature and type of investment. The investments of the above examples are of a nature of endowment of a perpetual type entrusting the guilds to pay regularly to the beneficiaries of the endowment. This clearly indicates that as bankers and trustees or as administrators of trust properties, these guilds enjoyed entire confidence of the public. Such confidence results not merely by legislation or by constitutional guarantees but by efficient and proper functioning of the institution. It would, therefore, be safe to infer that these institutions had developed into maturity and inspite of political unrest which the country witnessed during this period, the corporate bodies were strong enough to exercise a stabilising effect on the Indian economy.

Epigraphic evidence suggests that apart from the guilds or corporations working as banks, banking functions were performed to some extent by other bodies also. An example of such an investment is evidenced in

the following :

"By the Upāsikā Harisvāminī, the wife of the Upāsaka Sanasiddha, for the sake of her parents, twelve 'dīnāras' are given, as a permanent endowment, to the community of the faithful, collected from the four quarters of the world, at the holy great Vihāra of Kakanādaboṭa. With the interest that accrues on these 'dīnāras', day by day one Bhiksu, who has been introduced into the community, should be fed."

"Also, three 'dīnāras' are given in the ratna-gṛha (jewel-house). With the interest of these three 'dīnāras', day by day three lamps of the divine Buddha should be lit in the ratna-gṛha."

"Also, one 'dīnāra' is given in the place where (the images of) the four Buddhas are seated. With the interest of this, day by day a lamp of the divine Buddha should be lit in the place where (the images of) the four Buddhas are seated".

"Thus this permanent endowment, written upon stone (so as to endure) for the same time with the moon and the sun, has been accomplished

by the Upāsikā Harisvāminī, the noble lady, the wife of Sanasiddha."

Thus even temples and shrines acted as banks in receiving permanent deposits to provide out of the interest the articles for worship specified by the donors.

The Nasik inscription cited in the foregoing pages clearly states that "all this has been proclaimed (and) registered at the town-hall at the record office according to the custom." From this record it is clear that the deposits that the guilds received, were accepted under proper deeds of agreement,[1] which implied that the gift or the deed had to be notified, and that it was properly registered.

The guild system, started in the earliest times to meet the exigencies and requirements of the concerned profession, meant primarily to protect its members in a collective way from the excesses of the society and from its unsocial elements. Along with the

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1. Mookerji, ibid., pp.116-117(F.N.)

specialization of technical skills on more or less hereditary lines, the guilds started taking interest in the political administration in their respective areas and gradually grew into a power governing without much interference from the state, and more or less autonomous in authority. This contention is supported by the discovery of numerous seals and sealings issued by some of these guilds in different localities and at various times.

The earliest of such seal dies was discovered during the excavations at Bhita near Allahabad. The legend on the seal is "Sahijitiye nigamasa", and is written in letters of the third or perhaps fourth century B.C. Four other sealings of guilds bearing the legend 'nigama' or 'nigamasa' in Kuṣāṇa characters and a fifth one bearing the legend 'nigamasya' in Gupta characters have also been discovered. The house from which the seal die and these sealings have been discovered appears to be the 'House of the guild' or the nigama office.[1] Similar seals have

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[1] Marshal, Sir John, Arch.Surv., Annual Report, 1911-12, p.47.

also been brought to light by the excavations at Basarh, identified as Vaiśālī. Use of seals and sealings as a mark of identification of the authority of the user appears to have become common from the fourth or third century B.C., as will be evident from the discovery of seals issued by the Buddhist Saṅghas or monasteries.

Seals issued by various guilds at different times give names of the towns or localities to which they belong. It is believed that the guilds issuing such seals were self-governing political bodies and not merely industrial or commercial ones.[1] The inscription in cave no.18 at Nasik mentions the gift of a village by the citizens of Nasik and thus confirms the political authority of the corporation at Nasik. The Vivādaratnākara and Yājñavalkya also make mention of such nigamas, and the Viśuddhimagga clearly mentions

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[1] Cf. Bhandarkar, D.R., Carmichael Lectures, p.176.

that some of the 'nigamas' and 'gāmas' could even issue coins.[1] The discovery of some coins, issued by some of the guilds, from Taxila, further goes to establish the contention that these guilds had assumed the responsibility of local administration. The legend on these coins is as under:[2]

	Obverse	Reverse
No. 8	[? T]ālima [ta]	[N] egā [m]
No. 9	Dujaka	Negamā
No. 10	Dojaka	Negamâ
No. 11	A (taka ?)taká	Negam (ā)

The coins appear to be mercantile guild tokens[3] issued under the authority of the nigama.

Some of the seals, discovered at various sites, give names of individuals, who were either traders, merchants or bankers, and were perhaps members of the guilds also. The legend on some of the seals reads

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1. Mookerji, ibid., p.114.
2. Cunningham, Coins of Ancient India, p.63.
3. Rapson, J.R.A.S., 1900, p.99. Rapson considers the names occurring in the coin legends to be those of the rulers of the guilds.

'śresṭḥi-kulika-nigama', meaning thereby a corporation of bankers and merchants. Some of the seals have a legend śresṭḥi-sārthavāha-kulika-nigama (sometimes nigāma), meaning a corporation of bankers, traders and merchants.[1] One of the seals mentions a person, Hari by name, who styles himself as kulika and prathama-kulika, i.e. a merchant and a leader of the merchants.[2] These seals of the merchant guilds bear a symbol, which is generally taken as a money chest or a money bag. It resembles the money bag held by the attendent of Laksmī probably Kubera, throwing down coins. Some of the important persons mentioned in the seals are Ajapāla, Āryyanandī, Bhavasena, Nāgasiṁha, (also idea, Dharmmo-rakṣti-rakṣita), Ghoṣa, etc.[3] It is clear that śresṭḥis or businessmen had established themselves effectively in the social order and there is ~~a~~ reason to believe that these śresṭḥis were organised into social institutions very

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1. Mookerji, ibid., pp.112-113.
2. ibid., p.112.
3. ibid., p.113.

similar to the modern chambers of commerce. The literature of the period of later Dharmasūtras (covered by Nārada and Bṛhaspati) gives an interesting account about the nature and origin of the guild organisation in ancient India. According to Bṛhaspati,[1] it was " A compact formed among villagers, companies (of artisans) and associations." It is (called) an agreement; such (an agreement) must be observed both in times of distress and for acts of piety.

"When a danger is apprehended from robbers or thieves, it is (considered as) a distress common to all; in such a case, (the danger) must be repelled by all, not by one man alone whoever he may be."

Analysing the above passage in Bṛhaspati

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१. ग्रामश्रेणिगणानां संकेतः समयक्रिया ।
बाधाकाले तु सा कार्या धर्मकार्ये तथैव च ॥
चाटचौरभये बाधाः सर्वसाधारणाः स्मृताः ।
तत्रोपशमनं कार्यं सर्वैर्नैकेन केनचित् ॥

Dr. Majumdar arrives at the conclusion that such a guild or corporation was formed primarily for :

1. prevention of danger, and,
2. proper discharge of their religious and secular duties.

It is, therefore, implied that such organisations were not merely commercial corporations but also assumed duties and responsibilities of maintenance of law and order and protection of the society from thieves, robbers and irregular troops who might have been disbanded by the rulers after the conclusion of a war.[1] Thus a guild was primarily meant to be an autonomous organisation of a particular community or society to function, not merely as a commercial concern but as an organisation to guide, serve and control the society.

Such an organisation required a basic constitution to guide its functioning. According to Bṛhaspati, a guild generally

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[1] Majumdar, ibid., pp.47-49.

consisted of a chief, or a president assisted by two, three or five executive officers.[1] Persons selected or elected to the guilds had to be acquainted with Vedas and be capable of serving the society honestly. It was necessary that they were fully acquainted with their duty as members of the guild and were able and confident, and belonged to noble families and were skilled in every business connected with the society. These executive officers and the chief of the guild had sufficient powers to establish the authority of the guild and to administer law and order in their respective areas. Their authority was, however, restrained by the king who could interfere in case he found that the actions of these officers were malafide and were actuated by hatred, and meant to harm an individual. The king had the authority to rescind the decisions of the corporation, thus safeguarding the rights of an individual against the fury of the democratic organisations.[2] The

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1. ibid., p.52.
2. Cf. ibid., pp.52-54.

royal interference was, however, not arbitrary. The ground for such an interference arose when it was found that these bodies formed "combinations, prejudicial to the interests of the community, or arm themselves without sufficient cause, or quarrel with one another, or take steps which imply hostility to the king, or cause waste of public money, or commit actions morally reprehensible, or contrary to the dictates of religion as laid down in the Vedas or, lastly, when actuated by hatred, the members combine against and boycott one of them.[1]" It is clearly emphasised that a "corporation must not arm itself unless it is to repel some attack from within or without in connection with the discharge of its duties of watch and ward within its territorial jurisdiction"[2]. The king was also supposed to check certain political and moral crimes, such as "prostitution of widows or other virtuous females among heretics or other sinful men even

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1. Mookerji, R.K. Local Government in Ancient India, p. 246.
2. Ibid., p.247.

if it be a long-established institution".[1] The autonomy of these bodies was thus recognised only upto the extent they served their communities, and so long as they did not interfere with the authority of the State, religion and morality or the fundamental rights of its components, the citizens.

If the king had the right or authority to intervene in the affairs of an erring guild or corporation, it was also enjoined on him to know the guild laws. He was expected to respect the laws of the local bodies, and also to see that members of these bodies observed their own laws. "The king must discipline and establish again on the path (of duty) all such as have erred from their own laws whether families, castes, guilds, associations, or people of certain districts."[1] It, therefore, implies that the king was vested with appropriate " authority to enforce by means of adequate penal measures the due respect for guild-laws, guild-compacts, or

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1. Yājñavalkya, I.361.

contracts and agreements entered into by individual members with their associations." He could impose fines, and even banish a person from his realm.[1]

It is thus evident that the society fully realised the values of cooperation and appreciated the facilities it could afford. It was perhaps the consciousness of this utility in the public mind that led to the growth and development of corporate organisations into institutions, which may be called local government. These institutions were recognised in the law courts,[2] and themselves excercised judicial authority over their members. They were governed by rules under which they possessed movable and immovable property. They could contract loans collectively on behalf of the guild and even the individual executive officers had authority to enter into such transactions.[3]

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1. Mookerji, ibid., p.129.
2. Majumdar, R.C., Corporate life in ancient India, p.57.
3. ibid., p.58.

The Nasik Cave inscriptions referred to in the foregoing pages, indicate that the Śakas not only accepted these institutions in their entirety but also encouraged them in their usualfunctioning as local self government, particularly in their discharge of duties as commercial organisations. These institutions grew under the Śakas and were passed on to the posterity in a better shape and condition. This fact is corroborated by the Indore copper plate inscriptions of Skandagupta which is dated in the year 146 (taken to be 465 A.D.). This inscription records the gift of an endowment by a Brahmin with instructions that interest of the investment will be used for the maintenance of a lamp in a temple of sun-god. The Mandsaur stone inscription of Kumāragupta and Bandhuvarman relates about a guild by silk weavers who were originally settled at Lāṭa and in course of time migrated to the city of Daśapura. The record mentions that the entire community migrated from Lāṭa to Daśapura because they were attracted by the

virtues of the king of this country. The guild appears to be a complicated corporation, embodying various professions such as music, story-telling, religion, crafts (such as silk-weaving) astrology, etc.[1] "Thus", remarks Dr. Mookerji, "the religious and the secular, the spiritual and the practical, the literary and the military, find their place and scope under a common organisation. But this extraordinary diversity of pursuits within the same guild did not affect its corporate life or weaken its internal cohesion. Contradictions and disagreements of tastes and occupations were blended into a harmonious synthesis under the inspiration of a larger civic consciousness. The skilled musician, the valiant soldier, the clever weaver, the entertaining story-teller, the moralising preacher, the fortune-telling astrologer and the other worldly ascetic— all meet in the embrace of larger life. The consequence of this concord

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[1] Cited *ante*. p.262.

and cooperation was that the guild as a whole grew in power and prosperity, so that out of the abundance of its communal funds was constructed 'a noble and an unequalled temple of the sun'- a monument at once of its material and moral pre-eminence (udāra). Thus the history of this particular guild is a lesson in administration that has to deal with conflicting communities and interests. It is also surprising how a mere craft guild could nourish so much of intellectual life and culture among its members and open out to them within the ambit of its jurisdiction the opportunities for unfettered self-development."[1]

The entire range of the material of the last many pages, excepting that gleaned from the post-Vedic literature, is identical with the run of time during which the Śakas lived and ruled in India. The material furnishes rich evidence relating to the economic life under the Śakas and to the operations of

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1. ibid., pp.316-317.

corporate bodies which controlled the monetary transactions of the period. Just as the Śakas absorbed the culture of the land of their adoption, they likewise also undertook to operate the economic system of their own times.

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CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

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We have given in the foregoing chapters a record of the activities of the Śakas in this country as also, to a little extent, in the central Asian lands where they had camped and decamped, settled and unsettled before they entered India. Outside India their character had been tribal, nomadic, predatory and brutal. They did not have any social thought-out order except their funerary rituals. This, however, served them as an asset on their coming to India for they easily succumbed to and accepted the Indian social organisation. If they had a philosophy of life of their own they would have resisted the influences of Hinduism and as a result would have isolated themselves like the Muslims and the Christians who had the strength and prejudices of their own philosophy of life, a specific religions systems and personal and social laws to govern them which kept them aloof from the core of Indian population. It was easy therefore for the Śakas to accept the Hindu way

of life and soon they forgot whatever little they had to mark them out as specific ethnic and social units while entering the land from without.

The Śakas after establishing their royal houses accepted Indian religions and the local mode of living and, despite their technical involvement in the realm of politics, from which they continued to suffer by way of calling them Satraps and owing ineffective allegiance to the Iranian or Parthian monarchs, they completely identified themselves in course of time with Indian ideals. They modeled their lives after the Indian social order administering their domain in accordance with the rules of indigenous polity. They even called themselves Rājan, Mahārājā, Rāja, Mahārājā and the like usual epithets of the Hindu royalties.

We possess today countless epigraphical records wherein the Śaka rulers are evidenced to be protectors of the local religious sects worshiping Indian deities. If at all, they

only enriched the pantheon of Indian gods by adding to it central Asian deities like Surya generally garbed in the Iranian style in his images. Their patronage encouraged the carving of innumerable images as proved by the votive dedications during their rule. They had entered India as illiterate brutes but soon some of them mastered the Sanskrit language and literature and composed verses and literary compositions which have been commended by the modern historian. Rudradāman's remarkable record at Girnar is a veritable treat. The Śakas propagated the sciences of astronomy and astrology, introduced in India by the Greeks, and they used broadly the era started, as believed by most scholars, by Kaniṣka so as to prefix their ethnic name inseparably to it. The Śaka era is today recognised by the Indian Government as its national era.

The various guilds which ordered the corporate life in India may have begun earlier, indeed they did, but they found their extensive propagation and fulfilment during the rule of the Śakas who held almost the whole of northern

India under their five seats of Government from the opening of the christian era to about the 5th century A.D. when they were finally liquidated by Chandragupta Vikramaditya in Malva, Gujarat and Saurashtra. And even when they were crowded out of the land as unwanted foreigners they kept close to the borders of India along the ridges of the Hindukush and, as Śahiyas, they gaurded the marches of Indian frontiers in conjunction with the remnants of the Kuṣāṇas from the watch towers of Kabul until the 10th century.

The silver and copper currency of the land modelled on the Indo-Greek specimens, in the first case, was largely struck by them and extensively circulated in their dominions.

As they had completely forgotten their names and the rituals they once bore and performed in their original homes of central and western Asia under the stress of the fascinating cultural environs of their new home in India, they embraced the local habits and social convictions and christened themselves with Hindu

names, which however could as well be Buddhist or Jain. We get a large number of names of Saka princes and noblemen that are wholly Indian. We give below a string of such names gleaned from epigraphical records and the legends on the coins :

Śivaghosa,[1] Śivadatta,[2] Aryaman,[3]
Ụṣ~~h~~avadata (Ṛ~~i~~ṣabhadatta),[4] Rudradāman,[5]
Jayadāman,[6] Rudrasena,[7] Rudrasiṁha,[8]
Satyadāman,[9] Vīradāman,[10] Yaśodāman,[11]
Vijayasena[12] Damajadaśri,[13] Prithivīsena,[14]
Viśvasiṁha,[15] Bhartṛdāman,[16] Sanghadāman,[17]
Śridharavarman.[18]

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1. A.I.U., p.135
2. ibid.
3. ibid., p.181.
4. ibid.
5. ibid., p.184.
6. ibid., p.190.
7. ibid., p.189.
8. ibid., p.187.
9. ibid.
10. ibid., p.189.
11. ibid.
12. ibid.
13. ibid.
14. ibid., p.187.
15. ibid., p.189.
16. ibid.
17. ibid., p.187.
18. ibid., p.188.

Quite a few more names are on record besides those that find mention in the genealogical lists given in the body of this work.

The chapters preceding the present one furnish ample evidence of the governance, and the social, cultural and religious life of the Śakas. How they mingled and became greatly identical with the Indian population is a matter of common knowledge. It has been rightly asserted that when they could not be contained within the limits of this land they set sail from its western coast and reached the Indian archipelago of the East Indies and there helped propagate Indian culture among the newly settled colonies in the east. The central Asian Indian settlements on both borders of the Taklamakan and Gobi deserts had a liberal sprinkling of the Sakas who either had accepted the culture of the Buddhists or had imbibed that culture in India and had gone out and settled there. The contribution of the Śakas to Indian culture has been considerable and their ethnical bequest to its population ample and it

has been to India's glory. We find it not easy now, indeed at times impossible, to distinguish their identity in this vast concourse of humanity. They mingled easily without the assistance of the institution of a "Fire-pit". Their royal families married in the most ancient and respected Kṣ~~h~~atriya and Brahmin families like the Ikśvākus and the Śātavāhanas and propagated freely. The Sakas indeed were one of the most important feeders of the Indian social matrix.

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